


**RUGS IN THEIR NATIVE
LAND**



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Antique Kulah Rug

RUGS IN THEIR NATIVE LAND

BY

ELIZA DUNN

(Edith E. Norton)

WITH NUMEROUS COLOR PLATES AND
OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS



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INTRODUCTION

A RESIDENCE of many years in Turkey, part of the time in the far interior, offered ample opportunity to continue the study of Oriental rugs begun in America.

It is my purpose in this book to tell what I learned there about rug weaving, rug dyeing, and rug collecting. It is necessarily a narrative of personal experience, and the indulgence of the reader is craved for the use of the personal pronoun.

I have endeavored to avoid generalities, and to give the history and characteristic designs of each variety of rug, with illustrations of specimen pieces under separate headings.

The object in thus deviating from the plan of any other work on rugs is to enable

the reader who wishes to identify any particular rug to find everything that pertains to that variety in one place and not scattered through several chapters.

This arrangement, it is hoped, will meet a long-felt need, as expressed to me by collectors and students of rugs.

ELIZA DUNN

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THE STORY OF THE RUG AND
HOW IT IS MADE

Rugs in their Native Land

CHAPTER I

THE STORY OF THE RUG AND HOW IT IS MADE

MY first introduction to the study of Oriental Rugs in their native land was during the journey from the coast into the far interior of Turkey. This journey required two weeks and was made in a travelling wagon called an Araba. Being bound by no time tables except to reach by nightfall a town or settlement where accommodations for travellers and horses could be obtained, we were at liberty to stop where and when we chose.

Soon after leaving the City of Tocat, dating back to the time of the Roman occupation, the approach to which is over a

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stone arched Roman bridge as solid now as when it was first built, we came down the mountain side into a rich, fertile valley which was dotted over with the camps of nomad Kurds who at that season of the year move with their flocks and herds from place to place wherever good pasture can be obtained. The black camel's hair tents brought to my mind the tents of "Kedar" and we decided to pay them a visit.

Travelling with an official of the Government, we had in addition to the usual road escort of mounted gendarmes (which the Turkish government furnishes to travellers at a regular tariff) the Cavasses of the gentlemen with whom we travelled, so when we approached the settlement (if a group of tents can be dignified by that name) we were ushered into the tent of the chief of the tribe. There on a raised bank of earth sat the venerable old man dressed in flowing Oriental robes, with turbaned head and long gray beard. He welcomed us to a seat beside him while servants brought in the fra-



Melez Rug

grant coffee, the inevitable accompaniment to Turkish hospitality.

Those of our party not connected with the family of the official were seated on small rugs on the floor of hard packed clay. It was hard to realize that we had not suddenly been transported by magic back to the Old Testament times.

This must be Abraham, those black-eyed women stealing furtive glances at us around the corners of the tent curtains must be Sarah and Hagar, while Ishmael played with his companions in our midst, a game in which the knuckle bones of sheep were substituted for the marbles of modern times.

The fabric of the tent was closely woven camel's hair, into which were wrought some rude tribal designs. The curtains which divide or connect the smaller tents with that of the chief were kelims with the borders characteristic of the rugs woven by these people. We were taken to see the women weaving the rugs, and upon our re-

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turn to the chief's tent two very pretty ones were brought for our inspection. The man who displayed them interested us more than the rugs, which were the coarse variety made by these nomads, and we offered to buy them if he would let us take his picture. We posed him to our liking, holding a carpet in his hand, but when we adjusted the camera and were about to press the bulb, he turned and fled and no amount of persuasion could induce him to return or any explanation convince him that we had not aimed this deadly instrument directly at his heart with intent to kill. It was here that we first realized that in order to fully understand and appreciate Oriental rugs and kelims, one must not regard them merely as articles of merchandise but must know something of the life and customs of the people among whom they originated.

The inhabitants of Persia and Turkey in Asia (the countries from which most of our rugs are obtained) were originally nomads like our host. Their tents were

made also of camel and goat's hair, stoutly woven and rudely adorned with their tribal signs and symbols. Kelims were used for curtains and they are undoubtedly the earliest product of the Oriental loom.

Then came what we call hearth rugs, the original purpose of which was to cover the raised bank of earth at the end of the chief's tent. On this he sat in state to receive callers. A guest or a person of high rank was given a seat beside the chief on this rude divan. Those of lesser rank were assigned places on small mats on the earth floor. Prayer kelims and prayer rugs were kept carefully folded and stored in a safe place and were only brought out when required for use.

When the country became more settled and towns and villages sprung up, the dwellings were (and are still in the Interior) but an evolution of a tent built of mud bricks. Most of them still have only the earth floors. Across the end of the chief room where guests are received, is the

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raised seat of honour, made of wood or piles of felt cushions. Along the two sides of the room, a foot or two lower, run two long, narrow banks or divans where the family and callers of inferior rank sit. For these two long divans are made the rugs which we know in America by the name of runners. They are always made in pairs and come to Constantinople and other distributing centres in sets where they are separated by the wholesale dealers, when they make up the bales for sale to foreign buyers.

Weaving is one of the most ancient of the arts. It has been the work of women in all times and in all countries until the introduction of the modern factories. Long before Arachné's fabled challenge to Minerva some near descendant of our first Mother, sitting in her rude cave dwelling busily plaiting reeds and strips of leather into dress materials, had an inspiration: why not substitute for these crude materials, spun fibres? Her struggles to



Section of Antique Herat Rug

evolve the spindle upon which to spin the yarn, and the loom upon which to stretch the threads for warp and weft as well as her name are lost in that dim and distant past before History began.

In the Old Testament there are many references to woven fabrics. So they were not new when Moses fled from Egypt. Rude looms of very much the same form as are used to-day in Turkey, have been found depicted upon the Tombs of Thebes. The ancient Egyptians were noted for their manufacture of fine linen and cloth. Plato mentions one of the most important differences in warp and weft, namely that the threads of the former are strong and firm in consequence of being more twisted in spinning while the weft is softer and more yielding. Among the Greeks and Romans the weaving was always done by women, mainly slaves, but under the supervision of the mistress of the household. To her knowledge of the weaver's art Penelope owed her success in beguiling

her suitors for twenty years, until the return of her beloved Ulysses.

In the unchanging East weaving is still with but few exceptions woman's work. In the Interior of Asiatic Turkey and in Persia the patriarchal system still exists and the sons bring their wives home to live. I have known as many as 35 persons to live in one dwelling. The mother-in-law is the Queen of the household and every morning assigns to each woman and girl her task for the day. Life is sufficiently simple in these lands to satisfy the most ardent advocate of this method of existence. Some work must be found to fill in the spare hours, and rug making is one of these occupations. The very primitive loom consists simply of two poles driven into the ground parallel to each other, the space between determining the width of the rug. On the top rests a pole or roller which turns in holes bored in the upright poles or rests in deep notches in the ends of the upright rods. To this roller is



Shirvan Rug

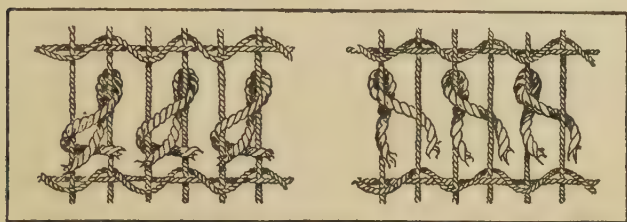
fastened the warp threads. The women and girls, down to little tots of five and six years of age, sit before this loom and weave. Each family or tribe has its own pattern, which is so well known by the older members that it is tied in from memory. The younger children at first work only upon the plain background of the rug, tying in one solid colour. This weaving by many hands, and the consequent variation in the tying of the knots is one of the reasons why Oriental rugs puff and lie unevenly on the floor. When a girl becomes fairly expert at weaving she is allowed to make a rug entirely alone, and if it is sold, the profit goes to her dowry account. In some of these rugs one can read the working of the girl's mind. At first she ties the knots loosely, making the rug larger at that end than the other. It is evident that she follows the design with difficulty, making frequent mistakes in the colour and position of the figures, or miscounting the knots so that

the design will not come out quite even. As time goes on she becomes more expert and copies the pattern more exactly and ties the knots tighter; finally toward the end in some cases she ceases to follow mechanically the set pattern. She begins to take interest in her work and to think about what she is doing, and then it often happens that the idea comes to her of improving upon or modifying the design in some way. Every rug tells a story of its own to the rug lover who is once fairly initiated into the cabalistic symbols found in Oriental weaving.

Rugs are divided into two general classes, Turkish and Persian, according as they are tied with the Ghiordes or Turkish knot or the Senna or Persian knot. There are some exceptions as to the old rugs which are tied with the Turkish knot and some of the Trans-Caucasian fabrics which are classed under the head of Persian rugs.

A glance at the accompanying illustra-

tion, or better still, a close examination of a Turkish carpet, will explain the difference in the two methods of knot tying. In rugs made with the Turkish knot the yarn is tied in such a manner that the two



Turkish knot

Senna knot

ends which make the pile of the rug alternate with every two threads of the warp, thus necessitating a longer pile in order to lap over and cover the two threads of warp. Consequently when the pile is shortened by long wear the warp threads are apt to show and the pattern be indistinct. On the other hand the long threads of wool in the Turkish rugs untwist and attain a silken sheen and softness impossible in a rug tied with the Persian or Senna knot. In Persian rugs the knot is tied in

such a way that between every thread of the warp a strand of yarn obtrudes. This way of weaving makes it possible to cut the ends of the wool closer, it gives the rug a surface resembling velvet in texture which when worn down to the very warp threads leaves intact the colouring and design. More knots can be tied to the square inch in a Persian than a Turkish rug, and consequently a finer and more expensive rug can be made with the Senna knot. One of the tests of value of a modern rug is the number of knots to the square inch. There is one distinguishing sign that marks a rug at a glance as either Turkish or Persian, and that is the general character of the design. The Turkish and Persians are both followers of the Prophet, but they belong to two opposing branches of the Mohammedan faith.

Between these two sects there is as great a fundamental difference of creed and practice as exists between Catholics and Protestants. The Turks belong to the Sunnite or



Kara Osman Oghlou Rug

conservative sect and believe that if they make anything in the form of any living creature, in the day of Judgment God will require them to give a soul to the shape they have made. In Turkish homes one never sees upon the walls pictures containing figures of men or animals, and never in a rug of Turkish manufacture. The designs are always floral or geometrical. Texts from the Koran written with many flourishes and richly ornamented adorn the walls of Turkish homes, but never pictures of living things.

The Persians, on the contrary, are Shiites, a more liberal sect allowing customs and practices tabooed by the Sunnites. It seems as if the Persians delighted to flaunt abroad these liberal and progressive ideas, for they put into their rugs in all sorts of ways and places not in the least connected with the design, the forms of men, animals, and birds the like of which can not be duplicated in nature. When one sees these square-legged beasts and impossible winged

creatures in a carpet, he need not stop to examine the knot, or study the design to locate the rug. It is Persian and nothing but Persian. It is said that genius requires no tools, and certainly it is easy to believe such a statement when one looks at a beautiful Oriental rug and then examines the implements used by the weaver. A knife, a pair of curved scissors, and a comb-like instrument to batten down the pile comprise their tools. These with the inherited deftness of fingers and the Oriental genius for colour combination are all that are necessary to create these works of art. The shearing of the pile is most difficult and is the work of one person in a family or neighbourhood. In the rug factories they have a sort of clipping machine on the lawn mower principle which is used to shear the rug evenly.

THE WOOL AND ITS
PREPARATION

CHAPTER II

THE WOOL AND ITS PREPARATION

ALL the wool used in the textile arts is supplied by artificially bred sheep. It is always in connection with centres of civilization that flocks are spoken of in Ancient History. In Ezekiel mention is made of the white wool that was brought from Damascus to be sold in the fairs of Tyre, previous to its being dyed into the famous Tyrian purple.

The sheep and goats in Persia and Turkey grow a much finer and more silken fleece than in other countries. Nature seems to have arranged climate, fodder, and other favouring conditions for furnishing the best wool from which to make the rugs that are the chief industry of the inhabitants.

The combing from the young lambs which once a year shed a fine undergrowth

of wool together with the wool about the head, and the fleece of lambs sheared for the first time is in Persia called the "Pashim" and in both Persia and Turkey is reserved for the finest rugs. Goat's hair is sometimes used, but on account of its wirey nature it spins poorly. Upon the goats raised in certain parts of Asia Minor there grows a very silky fleece next to the skin, a sort of an extra winter undergarment. This falls out in the spring and if combed out and saved it makes a very silky carpet. Camel's hair is also largely used, especially in the borders of Hammedan rugs.

The first step in the preparation of the wool for use is to rid it of all foreign substances. Then it is washed, many times in cold water, not allowing it to dry between washings. It is also frequently covered with a mixture of flour and water and pounded with great wooden mallets, before being thoroughly washed, often times being placed in baskets in a stream of running water. Soft water is always sought for this



Sarahk Rug

purpose. The drying in the sun is the next step, and sometimes the natives wait for weeks for just the best weather, a given amount of wind and sun being deemed the most desirable conditions for drying. Once dried, the wool is picked loose by pulling it over steel pins set upright in wooden blocks—but this process tears the fibres and the method preferred and generally used is that employed for cotton. A huge bow made of tough wood and strung with a stout cord or gut, is suspended in the middle from the ceiling so that the cord just touches the heap of wool. The end of the bow is held by the wool picker in his left hand, and in the right hand he holds a large wooden mallet with which he strikes the cord a series of short, sharp blows. The vibration whips the wool



Wooden spindle on which the wool is spun

loose and sends it flying off in the opposite direction from the bow, where it soon makes a great fluffy mound. The wool is always spun before being dyed and the spinning is done on the primitive wooden hand spindle. (See illustration.) One sees the women spinning as they walk along the road, and in the fields. Every spare moment is spent in twirling the spindle. After the wool is spun it is wound into skeins, then hung in lime water for some hours to cleanse it from all superfluous oil. It is then thoroughly washed and hung for a few hours in alum water as a mordant (for that which is to be coloured, yellow citric acid replaces the alum in the last bath). Thus the wool is made porous so that it can more easily absorb the colours in boiling.

DYEING



CHAPTER III

DYEING

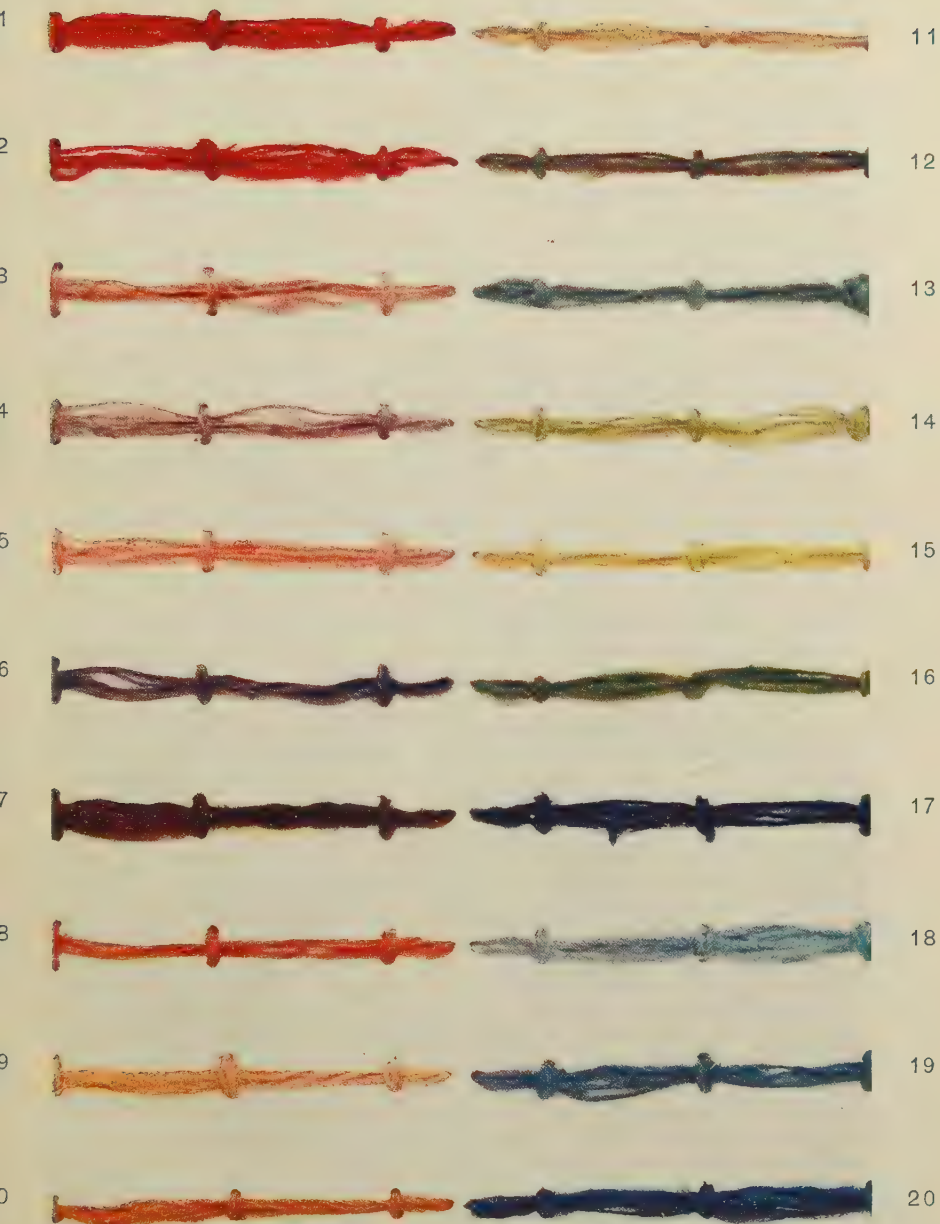
DYEING is the crux of the rug question, for upon the combination, lasting quality, softness and brilliancy of the colours rests the final sentence upon the merits of any rug.

Vegetable dyes are a *sine qua non* in a rug; all other dyes will disappear or change into ugly colours with the test of wear and washing.

None but colours compounded from vegetable substances will under the magic touch of time soften and blend into the colour symphony that is found in antique rugs. If one prefers to purchase comparatively new, unworn rugs and to do his own "antiquing" it is of prime importance that the colours be fast and of the kind that will

soften with age. The unfailing test as to the kind of dye used in any rug is to rub the surface with a cloth moistened with saliva. If the colours are made from any but vegetable dyes they will rub off on the cloth. The chemical properties of the saliva attack all but vegetable dyes and will start the colours which would not be in the least affected by washing with soap and water. Indigo is the only exception to this rule, as that will sometimes with a first rubbing show a trace of colour. A careless glance at an Oriental rug with all its varied tints and shadings would lead one to think that there were many colours employed, but a careful scrutiny will reveal only eight colours: red, blue, yellow, brown, green, black, white, and purple. The varying shades and tints of these fundamental colours are the secret and art of the Oriental dyer.

They are produced by varying the mordant, longer or shorter cooking with the dyes, dyeing one colour upon another, etc.



Samples of Colors obtained from pure vegetable dyes



Reds are of two principal kinds, madder and cochineal. Madder gives a dye of several shades of intensity from light apricot, for which the wool must be boiled one hour with the root, to deep rich red which must be boiled for two days.

“Worm red bugs,” as they are called in Turkey, are pounded fine and boiled with the wool. One hour’s cooking produces a light pink, three hours’ a deeper red, and two days’ a grand red, rich and deep but too expensive to be used in commercial rugs. Fuel is scarce in these countries; wood is sold by the pound, and to cook anything two days means a heavy outlay. In the majority of rugs made nowadays for the trade only the lighter shades are used, requiring but a few moments’ cooking. Although they appear bright and pretty now, ten years of wear will make them practically white. The beautiful light colours in antique rugs are the results of the softening process of time, but the colours were strong to begin with.

Blue is made with the essence of the Indigo plant raised in India. Into vats usually about five feet square is put some soured moist indigo, several pounds of molasses, and a little lime for a mordant. The vat is then filled up with warm water and the wool hung in it until it takes on the desired shade of blue.

Yellow is made principally with the green "Jahra" tree berries and the softer shades by boiling with onion skins. Turmeric and saffron are also used, especially in Persia. The turmeric is not of itself a fast colour, but used in combination with the other dyes produces a special tint of yellow.

Green is obtained by dipping the wool that has been dyed yellow into the indigo vat. The husks of green walnuts also give a green dye.

Old or ivory-tinted white is made by boiling the wool with gall nuts, pomegranate rind, or oak bark. By this process it is literally tanned.



Section of Old Daghestan Rug

Black is the cheapest of all dyes, being obtained from iron filings steeped in vinegar or pomegranate rinds. Black, whether dyed or obtained from the wool of black sheep, is to be avoided, for whether natural or dyed it rots easily and is always the first colour to wear off on a rug. Never buy a rug with a black ground, for its years of wear are limited, and when all the other parts of the rug are in good condition the black will have vanished.

Purple dyes are still obtained from the sea mollusks used in the old Tyrian dyes.

Camel's hair is the natural colour of the hair and comes in two shades, a light and a dark tan. Wool is also dyed to imitate the camel's hair and used in many rugs to replace the real article.—Dyeing is a much esteemed profession in the Orient and the men who are skilled in producing beautiful shades are persons of great importance in the community. They can be easily distinguished from their fellow citizens as

they walk through the town, for they never remove the marks of their trade from hands or clothing, regarding these signs of their craft much as Frenchmen would the insignia of the Legion of Honour. As pure soft water is so essential to successful dyeing, many villages, the inhabitants of which are all employed in this work, are situated about a suitable water-course. It is a curious sight as you approach such a village. The flat roofs of the tawny adobe houses will be covered as by an extra story with the frames, from which are suspended the skeins of bright-coloured yarn. In one such village that I visited nothing but red was dyed and it can easily be imagined what a blotch of colour such a town would make in the landscape on a fair day. Sunshine is an especially important factor in the dyeing of red, and the master dyer will watch the sun and feel of his skeins of yarn, pacing back and forth on the flat roof. When a certain state has been reached the yarn is removed as quickly as possible, for too



Ferehan Rug. Loaned by Liberty & Co.

long exposure might change or mar the shade for which he is famous.

The reason why in many Oriental rugs there will be a streak differing in colour from the main background or a different shade of the same colour, is because they mix only a certain quantity of dye at a time, and when the wool dyed at that time is all exhausted that obtained in the next dyeing may vary a trifle in the shade, or all the wool being used, and not wishing to wait for more to be dyed, they substitute another colour. This is no blemish in a rug from an Oriental point of view. It has been sometimes asserted that this streak of colour was purposely inserted to keep off the "evil eye" so much dreaded in the East. I do not think that is true, for a rosette of wool resembling an eye with pupil and iris of different colours is woven into the borders of rugs and kelims, or a tuft of wool with a blue bead upon it worked into the fabric. Blue is the colour employed in the Orient to counteract all evil influences.

Every horse, camel, donkey or buffalo wears a string of blue beads around the neck if the owner can afford them, or, if too poor to provide such a necklace, a few blue beads will be tied into the mane or tail of the animal or attached to the head-stall. Every person in the interior of Turkey carries what is called an evil eye to ward off calamities. This talisman is a flat disk of blue glass pierced at the back to allow it to be strung and worn about the neck if desired. In the centre on the front is painted an eye in black, white, and yellow, and it is the imitation of this eye which is so often seen on rugs and kelims.

*Samples of colours obtained from pure
Vegetable dyes.*

1. Pure cochineal, called in Turkey worm red. Very expensive.
2. Cochineal and madder root.
3. Cochineal and gall nuts.
4. Gall nuts and cochineal cooked together.
5. Cochineal cooked one hour.
6. Cochineal and indigo. Very expensive.

7. Pure madder root cooked 3 days. Very expensive.
8. Pure madder root (brick red).
9. Onion skins cooked 2 hours.
10. Onion skins cooked many hours make a beautiful golden sheen.
11. Gall nuts.
12. Indigo and Jahra berry.
13. Indigo and gall nuts.
14. Gall nuts, then onion skins, then indigo.
15. Pomegranate rind.
16. Walnut husks.
17. Pure indigo.
18. Indigo hung in vat one half hour.
19. Indigo hung in vat one hour.
20. Indigo hung in vat two hours.

DOCTORED RUGS

CHAPTER IV

DOCTORED RUGS

AS there are tricks in all trades, so there are many in the preparation of Oriental rugs for the Western market, but it is not the people who make the rugs that doctor them. It is done at Constantinople and by the Armenian collectors in the interior. The process is called by the innocent name of washing, but that does not mean as one would naturally suppose, cleansing them with soap and water. Upon slightly inclined platforms the new rugs (often coloured with vegetable dyes but of bright tints such as the Orientals love) are spread out. From vats at the top of these platforms a solution of chlorine water is allowed to trickle over the surface of the rugs until the bright

colours have been toned down to resemble the hues of an antique carpet. Rugs so treated have a harsh feeling and half of their years of service have been subtracted by this process.

It is easy to detect rugs so treated, for only the face of the carpet is faded and a glance at the back will reveal the colours several shades darker. Often a deep red at the back will appear a light pink on the surface of the rug.

I was astonished when in New York a short time ago to be frankly told by the head of one of the largest rug houses in that city that nearly all their large and some of the small rugs were now chemically washed. This work is now done in America by trained chemists and the results obtained are much more satisfactory than by the primitive methods employed in Turkey.

When I exclaimed in astonishment, "But that destroys half the life of a rug, and it ceases to be a work of art after such



Antique Kuba Rug

treatment," the gentleman replied: "Our customers do not care for that. They can afford a new carpet every year if they choose to have it, and the carpets so treated can be toned to match any colour scheme in the furnishing of a room." Would these same persons purchase and wear imitation gems coloured to match their gowns? To the rug lover and student it seems equally vulgar to purchase doctored rugs.

Reflecting another phase of the question is the following extract from a letter recently received from the head of one rug-making establishment in the Orient. He says:

"My heart is no longer in this work, for the present demand is for modern styles. Silly patterns, a fuzzy mixture of flowers meandering around on a medallion field, coloured in the little-cooked dyes which can be sold quickly to the Mrs. Newly Riches."

The exquisite silken sheen on some of the old rugs is chiefly due to the untwisting of the wool resulting from the friction

caused by contact with the woollen stockings that summer or winter the natives wear upon their feet. The yarn from which these stockings are knit is very tightly twisted and harsh. In the Orient every one removes his shoes or sandals upon entering the house and only the stockings come in contact with the rugs. This friction of the rough woollen stocking polishes, as it were, the surface of the rug and gives it a beautiful silken sheen.

An artificial gloss is given by the rug doctorers in Constantinople by dampening the surface first with a solution of glycerine water and then ironing with very hot irons.

In Turkey when rugs become soiled from long use or accident, they place them on the floor or the stone paved court, pour over just enough tepid water to wet the surface, then with pure castile soap (which is very cheap in the East) they make a lather which they rub well into the rugs with the hands, then they rinse by pouring water of the same temperature as was used



Antique Kulah Rug. Loaned by Liberty & Co.

with the soap over them, beginning at the top and with their hands scraping off the soap and dirt until the bottom is reached. If the rug is not quite clean the operation is repeated and it is rinsed until the water runs off clear ; then it is hung over poles, preferably in a shady place, to dry ; a little milk is sometimes rubbed over the surface after the last rinsing to restore the natural oil to the wool. The rug is always washed with the pile, *never against* it.

The toning process used by the Rug Syndicate of Smyrna has been developed and perfected to such an extent that neither warp nor woof is injured by the process and the colours are just as fast as those toned by time. Even exposure to the sun will not change them. The toning solution is sprinkled over the carpets by means of a great hose, and then the carpets are washed in clear water and when slightly dried ironed by steam-heated rollers.

DESIGN



CHAPTER V

DESIGN

IT would be an impossible task to trace the origin of design back to its source. It is as old as the imagination of man. All primitive peoples have had their picture writing, their own tribal and religious symbols. One can easily fancy how upon the approach of cold weather the early inhabitants of the earth sought refuge in protected caves and that some sort of skin was used to close the entrance to keep out the wind. It is also easy to fancy that in the long shut-in days before the return of warm weather these cave dwellers might have ornamented the curtains with various rude designs, possibly of plant or leaf forms with which they were familiar, or scenes from the chase.

In Turkey the courtyard upon which the house opens is frequently paved with small stones laid in a pattern, using black pebbles to work out a design. In the interior of the Island of Rhodes the one large room of the house is paved in this way and a regular rug design is worked out with the black and white pebbles. These stone carpets last from generation to generation and are of very ancient origin. I saw one that was over three hundred years old. Rugs are stories written in all the dialects of the world of imagination and tradition, but there is no Rosetta stone by which to decipher them, and even the weavers who make them cannot read their story. It is only by comparison and patient study that we are able to trace a few of these signs and symbols to the lands from which they came and discover some of the traditions and associations connected with them. One might almost say that in early times the weavers used as a main design what to them stood for religious or tribal traditions,



Lesghian Strip

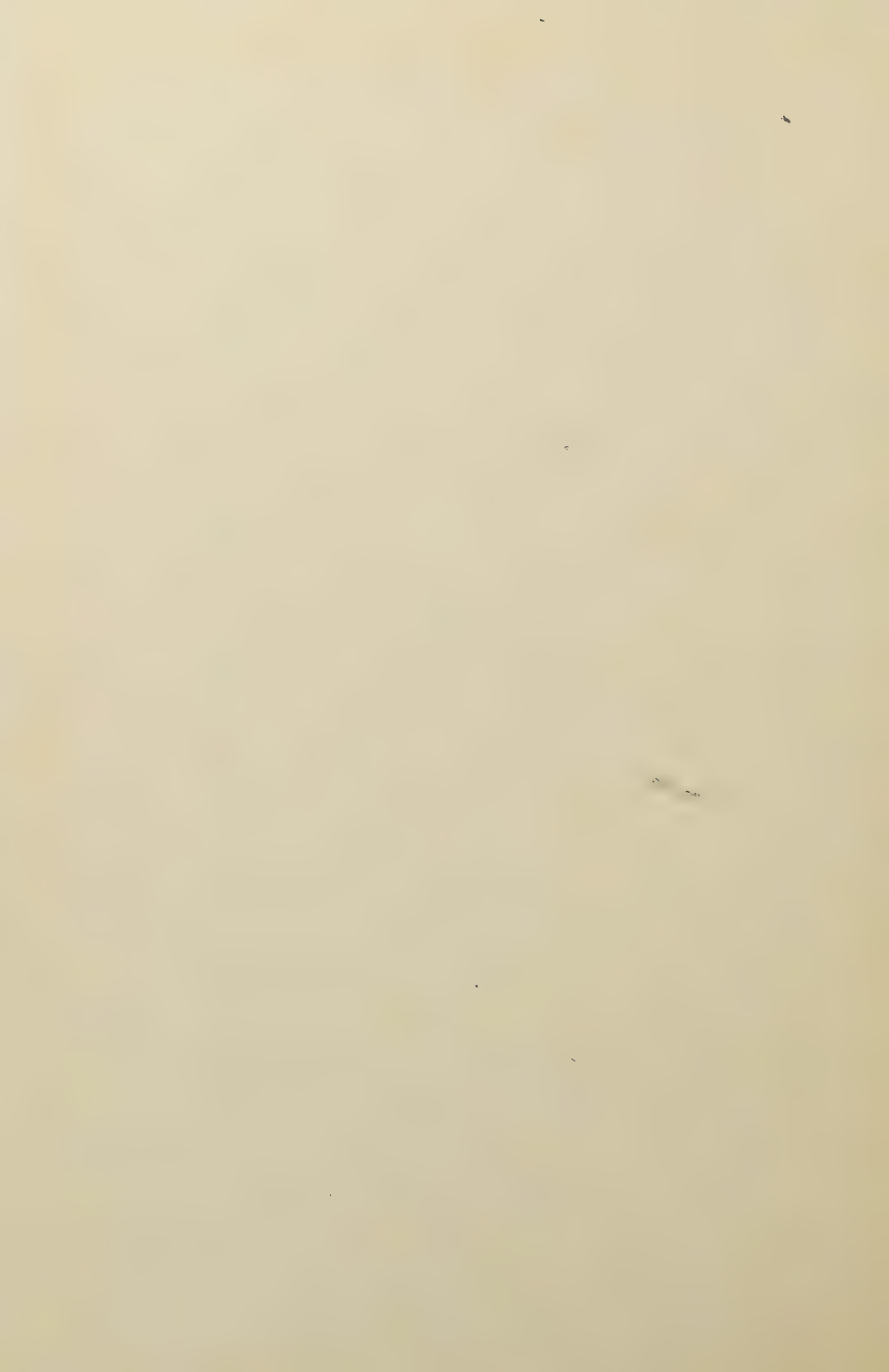


colour and form each having its own significance. This accomplished, free rein was given to the fancy in filling in the vacant spaces. The Persians usually employed for this purpose a tracery of flower or cloud and star forms. The nomad tribes used less graceful and more angular designs. Through wars, pilgrimages, and conquest the symbols of different tribes, religions, and countries have become mingled and commingled in a most curious way. The origin of some of the figures is easily discovered as that of the lily of the Nile which has travelled so far and been so frequently copied in stone and textiles. We find many Mongolian designs in Oriental rugs. These are largely due to the missionary zeal of an early successor of the Prophet who sent out four Moslem missionaries to China to preach the true faith in that part of the world. These men found that the Chinese manufactured paper and upon their return to Arabia brought back with them Chinese artisans to introduce

this industry into their own country. The Chinese naturally employed the designs with which they were familiar, and these designs were carried by the Mohammedan conquest into Persia. The name of Alexander the Great is usually associated with wars and conquest, yet in the transmission of design he was a veritable honeybee carrying the pollen of ideas and patterns from one land to another; for example, what inspiration and new material for the textile weavers must have been the spoils from the treasures of Darius that Alexander and his soldiers brought away with them. The art of weaving came to its culmination in Persia in the sixteenth century during the reign of Shah Abbas, and a favourite floral design of that period bears his name. In many of the rugs woven at that time and copied extensively since is a figure which has been commonly credited as being a reproduction of the leaf of the lotus plant; according to an Eastern legend the origin of this design is an interesting story.



Kirman Rug. Loaned by Liberty & Co.



The eldest son of Shah Abbas, impatient to occupy the throne, plotted against his father's life. His evil designs being discovered, he took refuge in the royal stable beside his father's favourite horse. Fearing he would harm the valuable animal if attempt were made to capture him, Shah Abbas immediately granted his pardon. In memory of this deliverance, the horse-shoe was woven into all the rugs made for him. The resemblance between this horse-shoe and a lily pad may not be evident to those who have not lived in the East, but it is no mystery to those who have seen the flat metal plate used there to protect the feet of the horses. They are the size and shape of the bottom of a horse's hoof, covering the entire surface with only a tiny hole in the centre for ventilation. Draw the outline of the bottom of a horse's hoof and you have a form closely resembling the leaf of the lotus lily. This story is also an example of the high regard in which the Oriental holds his horses. Colour

also had a language of its own and symbolized a definite thing to the ancients, as blue represented immortality to the Egyptians. It is related that when Athena wove into the sky the enchanting picture of flowers and gardens, mountain heights and the mighty beings who dwelt in the clouds with Jupiter, she took for her materials and colours the golden sunbeams that gilded the mountain top, the snowy fleece of the summer clouds, the blue ether of the summer sky, the bright green of the summer fields, and the royal purple of the autumn woods. The early weavers in the East, the land of the Arabian nights so full of imagery, may have had some such poetic vision which enabled them to combine the varying shades of a few colours in so marvellous a manner as to make exquisite pictures out of the common forms of life about them.

BUYING RUGS IN THE ORIENT



CHAPTER VI

BUYING RUGS IN THE ORIENT

IN Constantinople and Smyrna there are shops in the bazaars where one can purchase rugs in the same way as in America. But the tourist must be prepared to be charged double or treble their value. These same dealers, if they know you and know that you are conversant with the market value of the rugs, will sell for a reasonable price the same piece for which they would demand the exorbitant price from a tourist. This is partly due to the large commissions the dealers have to pay the guides, and these guides naturally take their clients to the shops where they can get the largest fees. So the tourist is literally "between the upper and the nether millstone."

I have seen rugs sold on the tourist steamers that come to Constantinople for prices twice and three times greater than I could purchase the same piece of the same dealers in the bazaar.

Some friends of mine went with a guest to one of the largest and finest rug stores in Stambul and were looking at some carpets. They were very naturally discussing the relative merits of the different rugs in English (the salesman also spoke English). They had not been there long when the proprietor of the store passed through the room and said in Turkish to the salesman: "Double the prices, they are Americans and can afford to pay." One of the party, who was as much at home in the Turkish as the English language, immediately replied: "We may be Americans but we do not propose on that account to pay more than the proper value for the rugs that we purchase." The astonishment of the dealer can be easily imagined.

Just before the tourist season in February



Section of Old Kazak Rug

and March, nearly everything for sale in the bazaars is marked at double its former price. The buyers for the large American and European houses who visit Constantinople annually are quite at the mercy of their interpreters for none of them that I have ever met can speak Turkish. In addition to their Greek or Jewish interpreter they usually have some local agent who has been collecting for them during their absence. Very few of these buyers ever go into the interior and if they did, they would again be at the mercy of their interpreter who could openly arrange with the man from whom they were purchasing for a most liberal commission and the buyer be none the wiser. There are choice old rugs still to be had in the interior of Turkey and Persia but they are mostly in Turkish houses and in the mosques and the men who do collect in the interior are Armenians and they have no access to the mosques and can seldom get into the Turkish houses. They wait their opportunity, however, and

take advantage of any change of fortune in a Turkish family to pick up here and there most of the choice rugs that are sent to Constantinople. Any one who has had commercial dealings with any member of the Armenian race will easily understand that between the prices that they pay for these rugs in the interior and the prices they demand from the wholesale dealers is a great difference, and this difference plus the wholesale dealers' profits is charged to the Western buyer. These Armenian collectors will take rugs that they purchase for a trifle and that seem in a hopeless state of decay; and they will deftly substitute new wool in the place of that which has vanished, paint up the faded spots, and otherwise rejuvenate the rug in such a skilful manner as to deceive the very elect.

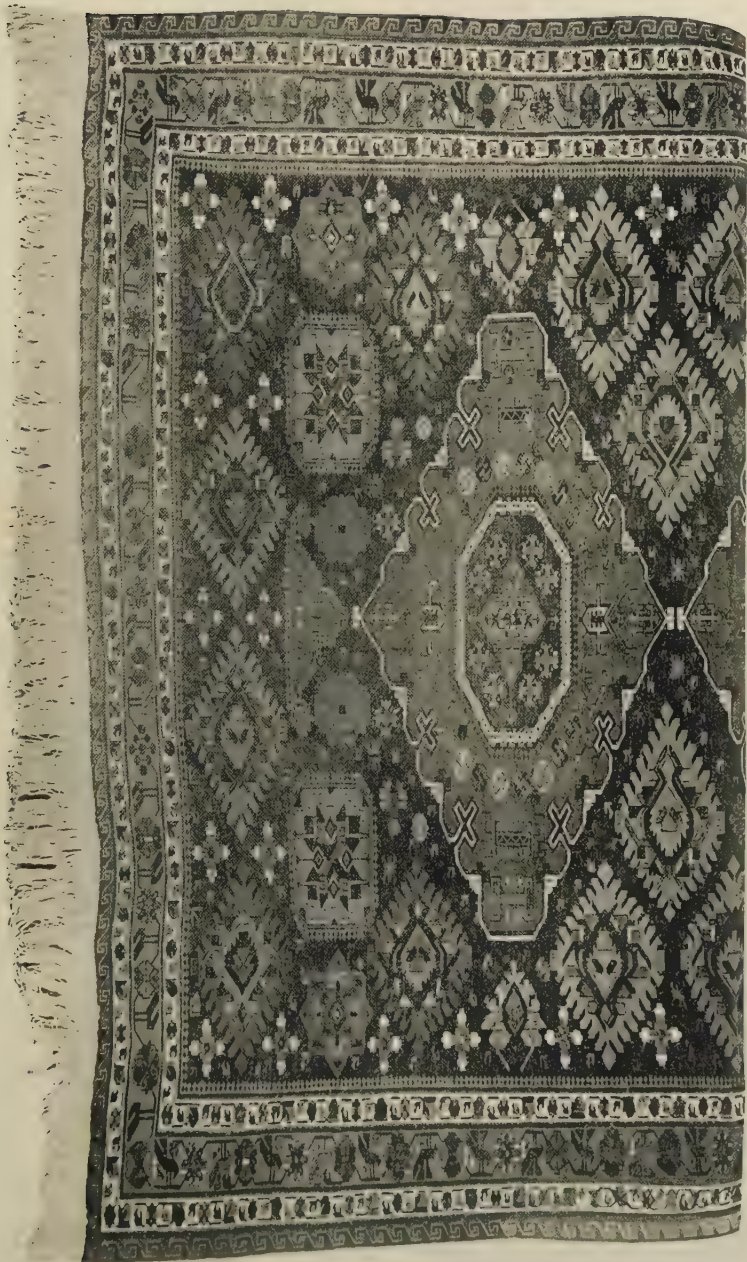
No race on the face of the earth has the capacity and skill for trade of the Armenian. Except in the port cities in Turkey there are no regular rug stores. One must collect from the houses, the baths,



Hammedan. Rug

and from travellers. Persians, particularly at the season of the year when the pilgrimage to Mecca is made, start from their homes with but little ready money and depend upon the sale of the half dozen rugs they take with them for their expenses. Often word would be brought to me that there were some travellers or pilgrims in the village khan. I would go and interview them and some of my choicest rugs have been purchased in this way. Again from families who were moving or from a stray caravan which was transporting rugs as a return cargo to the coast, and from the mosques I obtained many choice pieces. It has been asserted that there are no fine rugs left in the mosques, but I have seen them five deep upon the floor and have purchased all I could afford of these lovely pieces. It is still the custom in *the interior* for a Turk who has had some special blessing to give a rug to the mosque as a thank offering; or when he dies to bequeath a carpet to the mosque where he has wor-

shipped. Knowing the Turks well and speaking their language and being known as a friend, I was allowed to go where I chose, into mosques and everywhere. One day we were taking our usual outing on horseback and were passing through a dirty little village of mud houses, not one of which contained a pane of glass (oiled paper being pasted over the apertures that served as windows, when the winter season came). Just as we were leaving a boy came running toward us and spoke to the cavass, who turned his horse about and said to me: "This boy says that in the mosque here there is a fine rug and that they wish to sell it as the building needs repairing and they have no money." We retraced our steps and dismounted before the gate that lead into the mosque inclosure. There seated cross-legged by the door was the white-turbaned Imam (priest) with his school children, little boys and girls, on either side. He arose and salaamed and conducted us into the mosque. It was a bare room with



Section of Sumac Rug

a few ragged kelims on the floor, but before the altar was a splendid bit of colour, and when he took it up and brought it into the light it proved to be a most exquisite sara-band. Striving hard to conceal our delight, we called attention to two small holes in one end and asked the price. When he said \$12 we had not the courage to follow the usual custom and bargain for a lower figure. The Armenian who repaired it offered me \$50 for it, saying he would send it to his brother in New York who would get \$125 for it without any trouble.



CARPET RUGS

CHAPTER VII

CARPET RUGS

THE word "carpet" comes from the Latin word "carpere," to pluck, from the plucking or shearing of the wool from the sheep. The earliest use of carpets in Europe was for table and bed covers, the first being made in Venice; and it was not until early in 1700 that they were manufactured in England and then only for the rich. They were considered articles of great luxury, hence the term "Carpet Knight" for one who enjoyed ease and luxury and had not known the hardships of battle. In the Orient, with the exception of some large rugs made for the palaces of Shahs, Sultans, rich Pashas, or mosques, there were originally no rugs of the size to be used as a carpet in the West-

ern meaning of the word. The antique rugs come in sizes three by six and four by seven, etc.,—what we call hearth rug sizes, or the long, narrow strips known as runners. Prayer rugs were of various dimensions but generally small for private use or for use in the mosques. To meet the demand of Western buyers, factories have recently been established in Persia and Turkey where carpets of all sizes are made. In Persian carpets the Muskabads, Ghorevans, and Khorrasans are the cheaper grades though excellent in quality and very durable, especially the Muskabads and Ghorevans. The Tabriz, Kirman and Kirmanshas are the finest Persian rugs made in carpet sizes.

Turkish rugs in carpet sizes generally go under the name of Smyrna rugs, although the typical red, blue, and green Smyrna rug with its long, heavy pile, which is principally used in America in hotel lobbies and reading rooms, is only one of an infinite variety of rugs that are shipped from Smyrna, Sparta, Oushaks, and a great va-



Ghiordes Rug, Modern, No. 1

riety of rugs under as great a variety of names are made in the outlying towns and districts of Smyrna. No rugs are made in the city itself, but the firms who own and control the output of these rug factories have their warehouses and offices in Smyrna. The best wool and vegetable dyes are used in the manufacture of these carpets, and one can have them made to order in any size. Most exquisite reproductions of old Persian patterns can be ordered with the certainty in the majority of cases of most satisfactory results. With one exception the manufacturers of these Turkish rugs in and around Smyrna have lately combined to form a Syndicate. This Company (The Oriental Manufacturer's Limited) was formed in 1907 and began operations in 1908. It is the amalgamation of six firms engaged in the carpet trade, five of which were established in the Smyrna region and the sixth in London. It was capitalized at two million dollars. Through this combination of interests and

capital the carpet industry has been reintroduced in the districts of Asia Minor where it was formerly carried on but had ceased to exist, if not entirely, at least as a regular industry. By a more careful selection of the wool used in the manufacture and by the employment of none but the most solid dyes they are able to reproduce in artistic colouring and weaving the finest designs of Persia, India, and Anatolia. The spinning and dyeing of the yarns by the company in its own factories ensures the best quality of yarn and the most permanent and pure dyes. They own and control at present four to five thousand looms in about thirty villages and towns in Asia Minor. They employ twenty to twenty-five thousand women and children who weave the rugs and a large number of men who attend to the washing of the wool and the spinning and dyeing of the yarn. In some of these factories carpets and rugs are woven equal to the Persian makes in fineness of texture and even surpassing them

as regards colour, and their carpets have a deservedly high place in the foremost ranks of Oriental textile fabrics. At Harput, in the Province of Mamouret-ul-Aziz, the girls in the American Orphanage under the direction of an expert and conscientious superintendent are making rugs of great merit. The dyes employed are vegetable and strictly fast, the wool is of the best quality, and one can have any design copied in almost any size.

Plate No. I. shows an old Ghiordes design which was copied for me there.

Beautiful rugs are also made in large sizes at Sivas and by the Germans at Urfa.

CARPETS

The first carpet of which there is any authentic record is the one that was taken by the Arabs in 637 A. D. from the winter palace of the Persian or Sassanian Kings at Ctesiphon on the Tigris River eighteen or twenty miles from Bagdad. The exact date

of its manufacture is not known, but it was made for Khoaru I, who was a contemporary of the Greek Emperor Justinian and whose reign lasted from 531 to 579. In the East the gardens are divided into square and oblong plots surrounded by a wide border. These plots are intersected by paths, some of which serve to carry the water by which the garden is irrigated. Frequently these shallow irrigating ditches are paved with tiles. This earliest of carpets was intended to bring into the winter home of the King the illusion of a Persian garden in the full beauty of springtime. The materials were costly; silk, gold, silver and precious stones were employed. It was of colossal size. The flowers in the border and plots were in many colours—red, blue, yellow, white, and green—and were made of precious stones. The stalks and stems were of gold and silver. The yellow colour of the soil was imitated in gold, and crystal-clear stones represented the flowing water. The gravel paths were made of precious stones and



Antique Ghiordes Rug. Loaned by Liberty & Co.

pearls and the fruit of gems. It was valued at \$775,000. The Arab Commander-in-chief consulted his armies as to the disposition of this gigantic carpet, and it was agreed to send it to Medina for the residence of the Caliph Omar. It was accordingly sent, but instead of keeping it or giving it as an offering to some sacred mosque, he included it with the other treasures from Ctesiphon in the booty of the army and, contrary to all expectation, ordered it to be cut into separate pieces and divided among the soldiers, and it was thus lost to the world. Fortunately a happier fate awaited the famous Mosque of Ardebil carpet which was made in 1535 for the mosque whose name it bears. After a period of prolonged wars and struggles in Persia Shah Ismail came to the throne in 1502. Persian historians delight to dwell upon his character for they deem him not only the founder of a dynasty, but the one who established as a national religion the true faith of the

Prophet. He is styled the King of Shahs and during his reign tranquillity and peace were restored to the country and the arts were revived. His ancestors were regarded as holy men, some as saints, and the mosque of Ardebil was built near their tombs, that of his father being specially venerated as he was slain at Shirvan in an attempt to avenge the capture and death of his father; hence he was regarded as a martyr as well as a saint. The Mohammedans have in the Koran almost an exact translation of the tenth verse of the sixteenth Psalm, "Neither wilt Thou suffer Thine holy One to see corruption," and they believe that the bodies of those who have lived the life of a Holy devotee will be miraculously preserved from decay. The tombs therefore of such men are much venerated, and frequently mosques are built over or in the same inclosure with them. Pilgrimages are made to them and miracles of healing are believed to be wrought by bringing the sick to pray at these holy

places. I have frequently seen the sick carried on litters to these shrines; at the head of the tomb (usually a walled-in mound) stands one or more cypress trees, the lower branches of these trees will be covered with narrow strips of cloth tied into them by the pilgrims in the full faith that whatever they wish for when they tie on this bit of rag will be granted in the near or distant future, according as there are few or many knots made in fastening it to the tree, yet there must be sufficient to hold, for it would be fatal to their desires if this bit of rag should blow away. The graves at Ardebil were such as these, sacred places, and to honour them the mosque was built by Ismail. It was, however, in the reign of his son and successor Tamasp that the famous carpet was made. At the time of its manufacture it was deemed the most remarkable product that had ever come from the weavers' loom, and those who have looked upon it after the lapse of four centuries will, I am sure,

readily accord it this high meed of praise. It was this carpet which during the reign of Queen Elizabeth nearly caused a diplomatic rupture between England and Persia. The Queen sent an envoy to the Persian Government, and he was so offended by what he considered the insulting treatment he received that he was about to go away without delivering his message. The cause of all the trouble was a pair of slippers that were sent to him with the request that he put them on over his shoes when he entered the mosque before stepping upon the sacred carpet. This he interpreted to mean that his Christian feet must not touch the holy carpet, and did not realize that it was (and is to this day) the custom in the Orient to either remove the shoes or cover them with slippers upon entering a mosque, not because the feet are those of a Christian, but to prevent the sacred place from being polluted by the dirt and dust that might adhere to the shoes worn in the street, and that Mohammedans as well as Christians



Antique Persian Prayer Rug

are required to remove their shoes upon entering a mosque. The Ardebil carpet is thirty-six feet long by seventeen feet six inches wide. The ground is a rich blue, covered with a floral tracery of exquisite delicacy. In the centre there is a large medallion of pale yellow, its outer edge terminating in sixteen minaret-shaped points, connected with which by a leaf-like design are sixteen small medallion-shaped figures which represent the seed pod of the wild Persian rose cut in half; four are red, four green, and eight cream. From two of these figures on either side are suspended two mosque lamps which hang in each end of the carpet (two such lamps of almost identical design belonging to J. Pierpont Morgan are to be seen in an adjacent room). The crowning point of interest is the pale cream cartouche just within the border; on one end it contains the following inscription in bold characters. — “ I have no refuge in the world other than Thy threshold. My head has no protection other than this porchway.

The work of the slave of this Holy place, Maksuod of Kashan, in the year of the Hegira 946 (1540 A. D.)" — In the corner are quarter sections of the centre medallion; a narrow band of crimson covered with floral designs forms the first of the border series, then comes a band of cream about 7 inches wide containing a variation of the cloud pattern in beautiful shading. The broad or main border is of rich brown in which are set alternating elongated and rounded cartouches filled with floral and geometrical tracery, the former on a red ground, the latter on a green. The outer border is in tan shading from dark to light, relieved by a bold design in blue. When the carpet was brought to England it was in such a tattered condition as to be unmarketable, the borders being so badly damaged. The owner hearing that a duplicate of the same in size and colouring was in Ardebil, had it sent on and, taking from it the border, restored the mosque carpet to its present perfect condition. It

was purchased for the South Kensington Museum through the instrumentality of Mr. William Morris. The second carpet was after some years provided with other and foreign borders and sold to a wealthy American collector. It formed part of the Yerkes collection recently sold in New York.

In the Kaiser Frederick Museum at Berlin is a carpet of peculiar interest on account of the date of weaving as well as the unusual design. The centre medallion takes up nearly the whole width of the rug and is filled with flying cranes between bands of clouds. This representation of cranes is most unusual in Persian rugs, and suggests Chinese influence. The red ground of the medallion is in exquisite harmony with the white ground of the carpet on which is portrayed a wood filled with all sorts of animals — panthers, bulls, stags, jackals, etc. The trees are cypress, medlars, plane, and almond. In the corners, which, alas, have been cut off along with the end

borders, are to be seen the lower portion of figures in long garments reaching to the feet, such as are worn to-day in the East. The shoes worn by these men have soles shaped like the Chinese shoes. In the corners under the figures are three balls, which show the carpet to be very old, for they are the coat of arms, so to speak, of Timur the conqueror. Gonzales de Clarijo, who, as Ambassador of the Shah, visited Timur in 1404, noted that his tents, horses, shields, and flags all bore these balls, and these insignia were not used by his successors later than about 1535.

PRAYER RUGS

It is said that Mahomet, in the form of prayer which he devised for his followers, had in view the necessity of physical exercises for the health of the body as well as devotions for the good of the soul. If this be true, he certainly succeeded admirably, for the genuflections and prostrations and the rising from these postures without any



Antique Saraband Rug

aid from the hands is certainly an excellent set of exercises to keep the body supple and to increase the circulation. Five times each day the Mohammedan prays upon a carpet, kelim, or clean bit of cloth. Special prayer rugs for this purpose are found in every make. The prayer niche is always placed to point toward Mecca, and when the follower of the Prophet touches his forehead to the earth or floor he likes to have it rest upon the octagonal bit of clay from the holy city of Mecca which is placed in the niche.

One frequently sees, as in the accompanying illustration, an octagon outlined in the pattern in the prayer niche upon which to place this bit of sacred earth. Every Moslem performs certain ablutions before saying his prayers, cleansing hands, face, feet, mouth, etc., and always combs his beard if he has one. Combs such as are used in the Orient are sometimes in or near the prayer niche as in the rug in the illustration, and sometimes an ewer and

basin and a mosque lamp are introduced. This rug is an old Persian carpet, and has for a ground colour a shade of blue such as is often encountered in the old Persian tiles. The figures in field and border are of soft shades of reds, tans, and pinks with some white, and all harmonize in the wonderful manner that is the secret and art of the Persian weaver.

One sometimes sees prayer rugs with a double niche; these are used for two persons, and in some of the mosques there are long carpets divided horizontally by these designs into small sections just large enough for one person to kneel upon, thus furnishing a row of prayer rugs in one carpet.

BURIAL RUGS

When a Mohammedan dies the burial takes place within twenty-four hours, and frequently after the lapse of only a few hours. The body is generally placed in a rude coffin, but in the regions where wood is scarce and consequently expensive, the

coffin is frequently dispensed with. The body or the coffin is carried to the grave on a wooden stretcher, at the head of which is fastened a rod on which is placed the fez of the deceased. Over the body or coffin is thrown a burial rug if the family own or can borrow one. This is a very old custom. Andromache's chief regret, in her lament over the death of Hector was, "that his body laid exposed to the air far from his parents and his consort's care." Our use of the pall for covering the coffin is a survival of this custom. Rugs used for this purpose always have the tree design, — sometimes one large tree in the centre, sometimes the ground covered with small trees, but always a tree in some shape. The cypress is most commonly used, and is the tree always thickly planted in Turkish cemeteries. It seems to have been a symbol of immortality from very ancient times, and long before the time of Mahomet sprigs of it were buried with the dead and branches of it

80 RUGS IN THEIR NATIVE LAND

used in the homes as a symbol of mourning. Cypress trees were also planted above the graves. Ever green, this tree suggests unending life, and the wood is also almost indestructible. The original doors of St. Peter's in Rome were made of cypress wood, and when, after standing for a thousand years they were replaced by the splendid bronze ones that now close the sacred edifice, no trace of decay was to be found in them. In India the cypress also represents this idea of immortality, and the beautiful cypress trees that surround the Taj Mahal are a part of the glory of this wonderful tomb.

SILK RUGS

There is a vast difference between the silk rugs made in Turkey and those of Persian origin. Cæsarea (sometimes spelled with a K) is the centre of the silk carpet industry in Turkey, and at one time the Governor of the Province took such an interest in the work that he personally in-



Persian Silk Rug

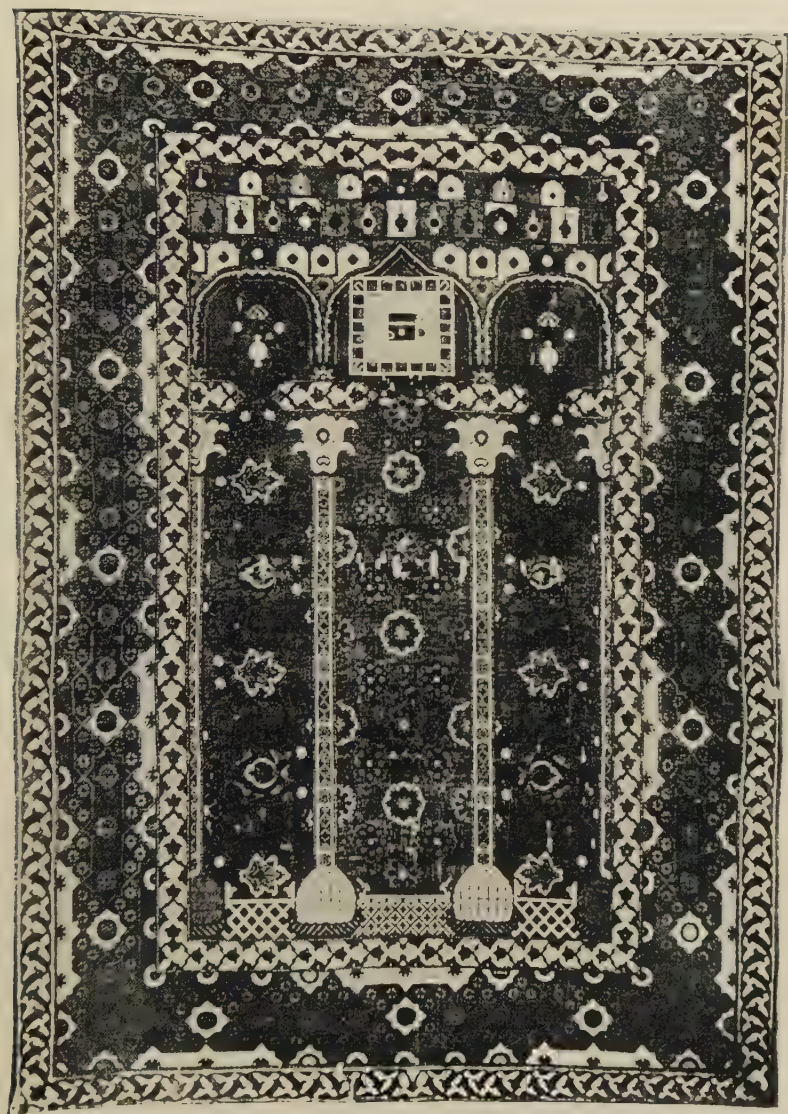
spected the output of the factory and condemned any inferior or imperfect piece. The rugs made at Cæsarea are mostly prayer rugs with plain centres. These are the rugs generally peddled by Armenians. They are not specially fine and can not compare with the silk rugs woven by several rug firms at Constantinople. At the Imperial rug factory at Hereke silk rugs of great beauty are also made, and even before the new regime their output was controlled by a local rug firm and a shop for their sale opened on the Grand Rue in Pera. The silk rugs of Persian make are quite well worth study. The fineness of design and detail, the blending of colours, and the texture make them works of art ranking with paintings as wall adornments. The silk rug in the illustration is of Persian make. Upon the softest tan or in some lights more of an ashes of roses tint, are mingled and commingled colours indescribable. Held one way the colour tone is wood brown, viewed from another point

grays and blues predominate. It is a veritable chameleon.

THE SACRED CARPET

There are three carpets sacred to the Mohammedans which were gifts from the first Shah of Persia who embraced the Mohammedan faith. These rugs are in the mosques at Konia, Jerusalem, and Mecca. It was my good fortune, through the influence of a Turkish friend, to be received by the grand Chelebi, or head of the Whirling Dervish sect at Konia (the man who girds on the sword of Othman when a new Sultan is crowned). When in the course of conversation he learned that I was interested in rugs he gave permission for me to go into the inclosure in the mosque where the sacred rug is kept in a beautiful chest inlaid with mother of pearl and silver. Removing my shoes, I followed the priest who had charge of this treasure.

He unlocked the chest with great ceremony and brought out for inspection the



Sacred Carpet

Holy Carpet upon which no Christian eyes are supposed to look. It is a prayer rug about three by five and made of the finest silk. A soft shade of tan is the ground; this is exactly the colour of the high fezzes worn by the whirling dervishes which remind one of great, inverted flower pots. Upon this tawny background is wrought the design of flowers and leaves in most exquisite colouring. Silver and gold are extensively used to outline the pattern and for the high lights, particularly in the border which has a design of pomegranates as a sort of secondary pattern. This use of the pomegranate in Mohammedan art is very interesting as it is of undoubted Hebrew origin. Pomegranates were carved upon the pillars of Solomon's Temple and were woven into the border of Aaron's garments and the curtains of the temple, and it is now more often employed than any other floral design in Turkey. The pomegranate is very highly regarded and is eaten religiously every day

for one month after the fruit ripens and is gathered. The juice squeezed from the seedy pulp with sugar and water added makes a most delicious drink, often called the wine of the Turks as it replaces for them the alcoholic drinks of Western nations. The true Turk is strictly temperate as the Koran forbids the use of fermented beverages. The candle sticks and the niche mark the rug as one to be used for prayer.

In the prayer niche is a reproduction of the black stone of Mecca which according to Mohammedan tradition was delivered to Abraham by the angel Gabriel. To shelter this stone the old Hebrew temple was built. It is said to have been originally white but has been turned black by the contact with sinful men.

Every Mohammedan is supposed to make the pilgrimage to Mecca once during his life, and the last act of worship of this pilgrimage is to pass around the Kaaba or tabernacle containing the stone which by



Ladik Rug

its magic power removes all taint of sin. The coverings of the tabernacle and stone are renewed every year and are the gift of the Sultan of Turkey who as Caliph is the successor of Mahomet as the spiritual head of all Islam. It is a great occasion when the caravan bearing this gift of the Sultan starts out on its journey to Mecca. It leaves from Scutari on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus and the camels bearing these sacred coverings are most magnificently caparisoned.

TURKISH RUGS

Rugs are generally classified as Persian or Turkish, Caucasian and Turkomans. Turkey is the most accessible to the foreigner and Constantinople the nearest rug market, so we will first consider the rugs generally classed as Turkish. Formerly Smyrna was considered synonymous with Turkish for a rug, but that mistake has been discovered by intelligent rug collectors.

86 RUGS IN THEIR NATIVE LAND

A great variety of rugs are made in the district near Smyrna; but these are, as has already been explained, largely carpet rugs. The old-time Smyrna rug with large figures and red, blue, and green colouring is largely superseded by the finer makes for which the best Persian designs are often employed. Some bear the names of the towns where the factories are located, as Oushack, Sparta, etc.

Turkish rugs proper rank in the following order: Ghiordes, Kulah, Ladiks, Pergamos, Melez, Konias, and Anatolians. Mosul and Kurdish rugs are also made in Turkey.

GHIORDES RUGS

Most of the Ghiordes rugs that come into the market now are worn and tattered fragments of what was and still is probably the most beautiful of all rugs. Though not so closely woven as the Persian makes, their chief glory is in their colour and the exquisite mosaic-like combinations in the

border. In no other rugs are the balancing and proportions of colour so well maintained. The Ghiordes prayer rugs have generally a central field of solid colour. From the high-pointed prayer niche, which is one of the marked characteristics of these rugs, there is frequently suspended in the plain centre a mosque lamp, usually of floral design. Two columns, one on either side of this lamp, intended to represent the two huge altar candles of the mosque, are often found in this particular type.

Frequently extending into the field from the border there are single flowers on long stems quite like the Konia motive. The wider border stripe contains a wonderful mosaic-like floral design often blocked off like tiles, each section containing a spray of two leaves and one blossom, or two blossoms and one leaf, or three blossoms.

The stems pointing alternately inward and outward give an undulating effect. The narrow ribbon-like stripes which

separate the borders proper carry a central wavy line. Sometimes the main border contains only leaf forms, and again for the main borders is substituted the narrow, alternating dark and light stripes containing the small fleck design characteristic of the Kulah rugs. Indeed, the Kulah and Ghiordes borders are often interchanged, as it were, in both makes. In the corner between the high arch (the angles of which are generally broken) and the border there is arranged in rows a repetition of the palm or pear pattern, or some variation of the leaf design of the border. Above this is a panel in which the principal colour of the border is accentuated. The patterns in this panel and in a similar panel (always put underneath the field) may carry a floral design or some geometrical figures like the swastika. A silk fringe, generally green, is often sewed around the upper end of the rug and extends down the sides about a foot.

At Magnesia, not far from Smyrna, lived



Kulah Rug. No. 1

and ruled the great feudal chief Kara Osman Oghlou. The splendour of his palace and his luxurious life reads like a tale from the Arabian Nights. He was a defier of Sultans and a regal lord. He commanded the Ghiordes weavers to make a special sort of rug for his exclusive use, and these carpets when they are to be found are called the Kara Osman Oghlou Ghiordes. It was my good fortune once in visiting the town of Magnesia to obtain a carpet from an old woman who claimed descent from this illustrious family. It can not of course be one that was made in the time of Kara Osman Oghlou, but it is a very old rug and has all the excellence for which the Ghiordes weavers were famous.

This design is sometimes copied now, but the modern copies are coarse specimens and can claim no kinship to the one shown in the illustration.

The black and white print is a prayer rug and was copied at Harput from a tattered old one. The centre and prevail-

ing tone is green. The space above the prayer niche is light blue and the lamp has warm red and brown shading. The border is a colour symphony as difficult to describe as an old Persian stained glass window.

KULAH RUGS

The old cities of Kulah and Ghiordes were near neighbours, and there is an interchange of design and ideas; so that it is exceedingly difficult to locate some rare pieces. The niche in the Kulah prayer rug is not so high and sharply defined as in the Ghiordes, nor has it the zigzag outline of the Ghiordes niche. In place of the wide central border stripe a number of narrow ones usually make up the Kulah border, though sometimes a broad stripe occurs; when it does, it is more frequently filled with small figures repeated horizontally in rows than the floral design employed in the Ghiordes border. Alternating narrow border stripes, one dark and one light, carrying a succession of small designs,

a sort of fleck pattern, are reckoned a distinctive Kulah mark. It is also copied in the Ghiordes rug, so one can not safely classify a rug by this mark alone.

Blue is a favourite colour for the ground of these rugs, but a soft shade of golden brown is so much employed that it might almost be called a Kulah brown.

Rug No. 1 has the centre of the peculiar Kulah brown of golden sheen. It has in addition to the three other borders the seven narrow, alternating dark and light stripes bearing the fleck design. Soft shades of green appear in the outline of some of these stripes and in the ground of two of the three wide border stripes. The two flower-like columns, so often seen in the Ghiordes rugs, must be set down as essentially of Kulah origin. Light blues, soft yellowish tans, greens, black, and faint pinks are the colours found in combination in the floral columns in this rug. The field above the niche on either end has a ground of light blue which is continued down, form-

ing another narrow border on the sides of the field. The white serrated pattern also becomes a zigzag border on a tan ground.

LADIK RUGS

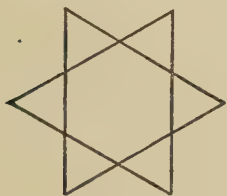
In olden times in the city of Laodicea (one of the seven cities of the seven churches of Asia) beautiful rugs were made. Rugs are made there to-day, but of inferior quality and design, bearing no resemblance to the artistic weavings of the past. Good specimens of the old rugs are still obtainable, but every year they command a higher price and one must search longer for them. The colouring is one of the chief charms of these rugs. They remind one of a walk in the autumn woods; soft reds, yellows, and browns are the prevailing tones, and when blue is employed it is the blue of an autumn sky at sunset with a suggestion of green in it.

The pattern is so characteristic of these rugs as to be unmistakable, a plain centre upon which is usually a mosque lantern, or

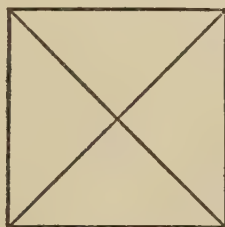


Pergamos Rug, No. 1

groups of two triangles filled with smaller ones, and outlined by the latch hook. A pointed prayer niche generally outlined in yellow, the lower part of the rug balancing the prayer niche, always containing five tree-like branches alternately capped with



Signet of David



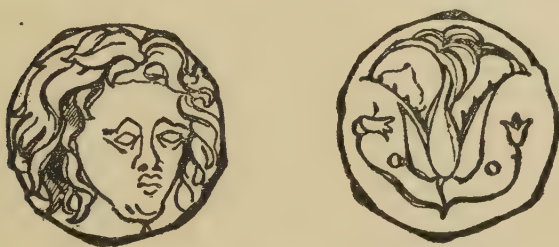
Seal of Solomon

a floral and a geometrical design. The border consists of a main border stripe with two or three narrow stripes repeated on each side. The edge is worked over with the kelim stitch, making a very stout selvedge. The narrow borders are usually alternating bands of black and white (the so-called Kulah border), each narrow band containing a succession of unconnected, separate small designs. There is frequently

a narrow stripe of white next to the centre carrying the undulating or meander pattern. The main border stripe in many of the oldest specimens has the Rhodian lily design alternating with the rosette. The use of this old Rhodian pattern is very interesting, showing the migration of ideas. The Rhodian lily is not, as some writers would have us believe, of obscure origin. During a visit to Rhodes a few years ago I had the privilege of meeting and becoming acquainted with Mr. Billioti, who, with his brother Sir Alfred, made the excavations for the British Museum of the old tombs and cities on the Island. They are authority upon all things Rhodian, and they told me that the origin of the lily design goes back to the earliest tradition of the Island. "When Apollo was away on his charitable mission of driving the Sun Chariot and bringing light to the earth, the world was partitioned out among the Gods, and Apollo, not being present, was quite forgotten in the distribution. Upon his return he made

complaint to Jove who, in order to make due reparation, caused the Island of Rhodes to rise up out of the sea covered with beautiful lilies."

The inhabitants to this day repeat this legend and point to the sea shells that are found in the highest parts as corroborating



Oldest Rhodian Coin

the story. Be that as it may, this peculiar lily has been emblematic of Rhodes ever since. The oldest coin of Rhodes has the head of Apollo on one side and the lily on the other. (See illustration.) It is the chief feature in the decoration of the beautiful tiles and pottery made there thousands of years ago. The rug in plate No. 3 shows the Rhodian lily design in the

border and also the Konia floral design branching out from the border into the field. It has the mosque lantern, and both rugs Nos. 1 and 2 have above the prayer niche in either corner the lamp design. The blue in the field of No. 2 is a most exquisite shade, with a greenish cast.

PERGAMOS RUGS

Pergamos, or Bergamo, rugs, as they are sometimes called, are a type by themselves. Pergamos, when St. John wrote of it in Revelation, was one of the oldest cities of Asia Minor, having a history supplemented by tradition reaching back to Telephos, the son of Hercules, whose interesting history carved in marble adorned the frieze of the great temple and is now to be seen in the Museum at Berlin. Its rulers were at least amenable to the influences of Grecian art, as is witnessed by its ruined Acropolis and even by the designs found in the rugs woven there. Most of the Pergamos rugs made to-day are coarse and



Antique Pergamos Rug

degenerate in pattern. In the old rugs, although the nap is a bit longer than in the Ghiordes, Kulahs, or Ladiks, still the effect is good. Blue and red set off by white are the colours commonly found in them. The design always starts from the centre and is repeated each way, and frequently a tuft of wool is found in the centre, a sort of evil-eye charm. They are usually small rugs, wide in proportion to their length. The curious treatment of the last two or three warp threads on each side which are worked in the kelim stitch forming a strong selvedge is a peculiar characteristic of this make of rug. The one in the illustration is a very fine rug, both in colouring and design including the Rhodian lily, and it lays more smoothly upon the floor than most Pergamos rugs (for it is sometimes necessary to cut out the selvedge and fringe out the ends to make them lie flat). I purchased a rug from a Greek family living near Pergamos, which even the experts to whom I have

submitted it hesitate to classify, and it is indeed difficult. (See coloured plate.) In weave, texture, closeness of nap, design, colour, everything that usually determines the family to which a rug belongs, it is a Ghiordes. The only Pergamos feature is the half-inch selvedge on each side worked in the kelim stitch and the coloured web at each end. This selvedge and woven band of warp and weft are distinctive marks of the Pergamos rug. Query, shall we locate the rug by its colour, design, weave, etc., or by the sole earmark, as it were, of selvedge and web extension? To whichever family it belongs it honours its parentage.

MELEZ RUGS

Good Melez or Melhaz rugs are now difficult to obtain, and they increase in price every year. This name is given to the rugs made in the vicinity of the city of Melhaz, a town of Asia Minor on the coast nearly opposite the Island of Rhodes. In the old rugs like the one in the illustra-

tion a perfect harmony of colouring exists, a rich brownish red in the centre and greenish shades in the border designs. An occasional touch of lavender is also present. In the field above the prayer niche on an ivory white ground is a lattice-like device in the softest tones of red, canary yellow, greens, and lavender.

One should not neglect to purchase good specimens when encountered; for they are disappearing, and it will soon be impossible to obtain them.

KONIAH AND ANATOLIAN RUGS

Koniah, the ancient Iconium from which Paul and Barnabas fled to escape being stoned, has always been a centre for weaving. The older rugs never attained the fame of the Ghiordes and Kulahs or even that of the Pergamos or Ladiks, but they were fine rugs of warm, rich hues. They were made generally in hearth-rug size, with the corners in both ends of the field cut off, forming almost two prayer niches;

single flower forms on long stems extended into the field. The borders were sometimes floral and sometimes made up of narrow stripes, and red was always the predominating colour.

Very few of these rugs are now in the market. The modern Konia weaving is confined almost entirely to the large carpet rugs, and Smyrna firms have factories there and in the adjacent villages. The general name Anatolia covers a wide range of rugs made in Central and Western Turkey, and represents every grade and design.

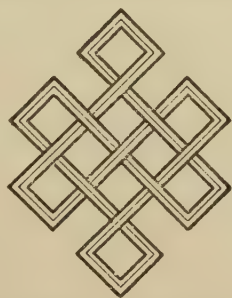
MOSUL CARPETS

Mosul carpets may be of the texture of a Persian Shiraz or the heavy, long-piled Kurdish rug, according as they are made in the region adjacent to and controlled by Persian influences or on the side controlled by the wild tribesmen. The city of Mosul (the ancient Nineveh) is situated on the Tigris River, not far from the Persian border. There are more rugs



Mosul Rug. No. 1

made and shipped from the Mosul district than perhaps any other unless it be Smyrna, and some of them are very good but many very bad. The specimen No. 1 in the accompanying illustration is an old Mosul rug showing Daghestan influences. Most lovely and soft is the colouring, pale blues, tans, and pinks predominating with plenty of ivory white. No. 2 is one in which the maker gave free hand to his love of colour. The design is a mosaic, two rows of octagons, each one bordered by the latch-hook design and containing in the centre the knot of destiny.



Each one of these octagons is a colour study. One in exquisite green with latch-hook pattern in old rose, a darker shade of old rose occurring in the centre on which the knot of destiny is wrought out in blue and old gold, and tiny white triangles in which there is a dot of pink. The next octagon blue with old

rose latch hook, the centre green, in which the knot of destiny is in light blue and deep rose, etc., etc. It reminds one of a stained glass window. The border of three stripes, the centre in a sort of crushed strawberry shade, and the side borders carrying a floral design in blue, rose, and green.

KURDISH RUGS

In the Dersim mountains near the Euphrates River live the Kurds, the Highlanders of Turkey. They are mostly nomads, or when settled in villages living in true feudal style. The chief owns and controls everything and the others are practically serfs. They are bold and warlike. Their women wear a peculiar white head dress and go unveiled in their native villages. They have the reputation of being always ready for a fight or a plundering expedition, but they make perfect servants, for having once entered your employ and eaten your bread they are faithful unto death. It is to be expected that the rugs

woven by these tribes should be heavy and of barbaric design. Brownish madder reds are the ground of these carpets; white, yellow, and green are employed in the patterns. Their rugs are usually divided into three sections. The designs huge geometrical affairs—usually being the same in each section. They are very durable and soft; your feet fairly sinking in the long pile as you step on them.

PERSIAN RUGS

It is somewhat difficult to classify Persian rugs in the order of their merit, as there is such a difference in individual opinion.

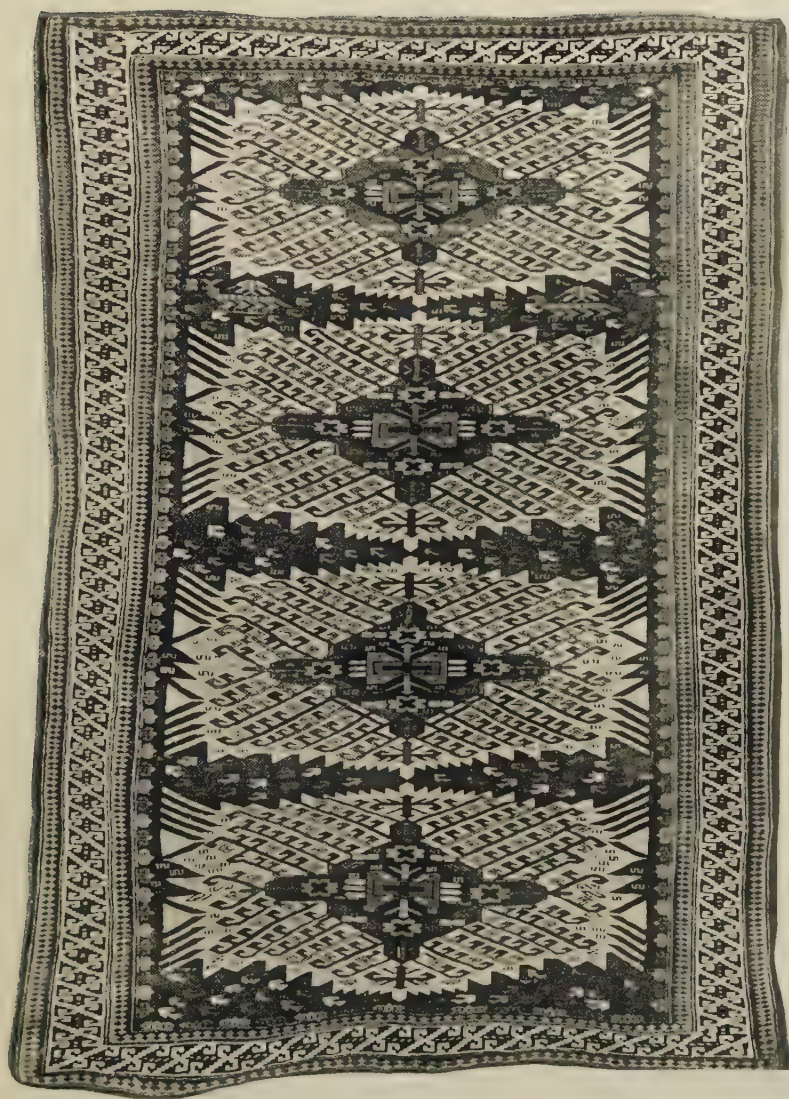
This list does not profess to be a final judgment upon them, but simply a personal opinion.

Kirman, Kirmansha, Tabriz or Kermanshah, Senna, Sarak, Saraband, Ferehan, Herat, Hammedan, Shiraz, Ghorevan, Meshed or Muskabad, and Khorasan.

KIRMAN, KIRMANSHA AND TABRIZ OR
KERMANS SHAH RUGS

When Marco Polo travelled in Persia in 1270 he said in describing the industries of the Southern Province of Kirman: "The ladies of this country produce exquisite needlework; they work and weave hangings and rugs for the noblemen so deftly that they are marvels to see."

The population of this province is more purely Persian than that of any other part of the Empire. It is claimed also that a very superior breed of sheep and goats are raised there, and that the wool is of better and softer quality in the Kirman than in any other make of carpets. A part of the province bears the name of Kirmansha, so that the carpets bearing either name come from the same district and must not be confounded with the Kermanshahs from the North. Both large and small rugs are made there. The design of the Kirman is of the floral order, although in some of



Kabistan Rug, Modern, No. I

the carpets made in the last few years the medallion is introduced. In the older rugs not only flowers and trees but birds, beasts, landscapes, and even human figures are found. The palm leaf in large form is also employed. These carpets are not so firm or heavy as those from Tabriz, and the floral designs are treated with a lighter, more graceful touch. The background is generally ivory or a yellowish gray. The border stripes are numerous and filled with finely wrought designs. The warp is cotton or cotton and wool mixed. The Tabriz rugs are made now in factories in the city of Tabriz, boys being largely employed in the weaving. These factories are mostly under European control, and only the best materials are used. Both large and small rugs are woven, but more of the larger or carpet sizes. These rugs generally bear the name of Kermanshas in the Western market, but they must not be confounded with the Kermanshahs made by the mountaineers along the Turkish border, for they

are of loose, coarse weave and are not of the same class. The Tabriz rugs copy very closely the old Kirman designs and usually have a large medallion in the centre and elaborate corner ornamentation. The borders are many and varied in design and the field of the rug is generally well covered with a fine pattern. Some of them have Italian or European patterns, but not often. In quality, workmanship, and fineness of texture they rank with those from Kirman in the first class of Persian rugs. They are coloured with vegetable dyes but nearly always chemically washed to soften and tone down the colouring.

There are old Kirmanshas to be found occasionally, but they are rare, and nearly always one must reckon upon these carpets being "doctored" if they are of very soft or delicate colouring. You can only be sure of a Kirman or a Tabriz if the colours are reds, blues, and yellows of not too delicate shading.

SENNA RUGS

Although the city and district of Senna lies near the Turkish border, the rugs made there are distinctly Persian and rank with the Tabriz and Kirman as to quality. Some of the modern rugs show a tendency to degeneracy, but as a class they have kept wonderfully true to traditional patterns. The background is usually white, although sometimes of an ivory tint. The pear pattern, generally small (but sometimes on a large scale, three or four covering the entire field), is used, or the fish part of the Herati design covers the centre with occasionally a medallion in the middle. The warp is always cotton and the pile closely trimmed, the borders usually three in number, the centre stripe broader and flanked by the narrow ones, — the latter generally containing some form of the meander.

Good old Senna pillow rugs are not infrequently met with now, in the interior.

SARAKHS

These rugs are colour signals flaunted in a host of brilliant shades by the tribesmen who were ruled by Genghis and Tartar chiefs. One would think such brilliant colours could not be combined in an artistic way, but such is not the case.

The design of these carpets is simple and somewhat crude ; a scragly pear pattern usually covers the field ; sometimes there is a medallion in the centre, but not often. Two borders complete the pattern ; these contain floral forms with a broad stripe between bearing geometrical figures. Colour is everywhere rampant and glorious. It appeals to more than the sight, and somehow suggests the word "delicious." The red in the background of the one shown is the colour of rich blood as it flows fresh from a wound. Blue, yellow, and pink, and even touches of green, are employed in working out the pattern, but there is no jarring note in the whole carpet.



Kabistan Rug

SARABAND RUGS

The Saraband rugs always have the centre covered with the so-called pear pattern on a field usually of a beautiful shade of wine red. The border is always in "threes," the main stripe a little wider with a narrow one on each side. These sets of "threes" are often repeated so that there will be six and nine and even twelve border stripes always in the arrangement described. There is a regular Saraband border pattern which is quite as characteristic of the rug as the pear pattern in the field (as shown in the illustration), but in some of the older rugs the centre band of the border contains another design. The pear, river loop, cone, or palm-leaf design was first made known to us in the Cashmere and India shawls, and is employed in many rugs, but it is a characteristic feature of the Saraband. The origin of this design is credited by various authors to various sources. In its simplest or cone form

it was thought to represent the fruit of the sacred tree, which was used as the symbol of immortality by the ancients. By some it is judged to represent the loop made by River Ganges or Indus, sacred to the pilgrims. In this form it is more elongated and graceful than in the other representations. It has also been claimed that it was intended to reproduce the chief ornament of the old Persian crown, which is a composite pear-shaped jewel. I should be more inclined to believe that it was either the symbol used by the fire worshippers to reproduce in their rugs and shawls the cone of flame, which they worshipped (and which they still worship in parts of Turkey and Persia to this day), or to reproduce the palm leaf or stamp as was explained to me once by an old Sheik.

The custom still survives from the olden time of affixing to covenants and documents of importance as a seal, the sign made by dipping the side of the half-closed hand in blood and pressing it upon the paper or

parchment. This gives a figure resembling very closely the so-called "palm leaf," and the Turkish word for the palm of the hand, el-ayassi, is often given to this pattern.

HERAT AND FEREHAN RUGS

The city of Herat is, strictly speaking, not Persian, as it is outside the present boundary of that country, and on account of its geographical position is often spoken of as the key to India. The Herat carpets are, however, classed as Persian fabrics. Old Herat rugs are seldom encountered in the market, but new ones of good quality may be purchased any day. The Herati design is the most widely copied of any pattern and is common to a great variety of rugs. It is as characteristic a feature of the Ferehan as of the real Herat, but is used only in the field of the Ferehan carpet and is much smaller and less clearly drawn. The Herati design is never employed in the border of the Ferehan rug, which has a distinctive border of its own, consisting usu-

ally of three stripes, the middle one of alternating rosettes and palmettes upon a waving vine wrought upon a pale green background. The Senna knot is always employed in these rugs, while the Ghiordes knot is always used in the Herat rugs and is one of the distinguishing features of this make of carpet. The Herati design is of very ancient origin. By some authorities it is claimed to be of Chinese origin, and by others of Egyptian. The lancet-like leaves representing the sacred fish of Isis and the lotus-like rosette certainly suggest Egyptian derivation as very possible. In this design the four petals of the blossom are sometimes pegged down to the ground to serve as a pattern to the weaver and are so represented in the carpet. The leaves are also frequently prolonged so they meet those of the next series until they form a sort of trellis.

The Herat rug shown in the illustration is one of a pair that I bought in a house in the interior of Turkey. They had covered the long low divans of the guest



Bokhara Rug, Royal Design

room for forty years, and were old rugs when they were purchased by this family. Only the lapse of many years could have produced the exquisite colouring and silken sheen characterizing them. The border as well as the field is covered with the Herati design. The Ferehan in the illustration is an old carpet containing the best traditions of this weave.

HAMMEDAN RUGS

The Hammedan rugs continue the traditions of former times more than any others unless it be the Bokharas. I doubt not that Esther knelt before Ahasuerus on a rug bordered by a wide band of camel's hair, with a small medallion in the centre upon a field of ivory white, the corners cut off by a design corresponding to the centre medallion and the field covered by a diaper fret of camel's hair, or with a semi-floral geometrical design with a pinkish tinge. Haman's friends doubtless threw such a rug over his body when they removed

it from the gallows he had erected for Mordecai and carried it to its last resting place.

Most of the Hammedans follow this pattern, and one always finds this cutting off of the corners, making as it were a sort of prayer niche at both ends of the rug. In the old tribal days rugs so marked were the "hearth" rugs, not in the sense we use the word to mean the space before a fireplace, for then as now the fires with which these people heat their houses were contained in braziers which were almost always placed in the centre of the room, but hearth in the sense of home. They corresponded to the cities of refuge set apart by Moses to which offenders against the law might flee for refuge. Once such a fugitive, fleeing from his enemies, gained entrance to the sheik's tent and set foot on this rug, then the sheik and the whole tribe were bound to defend him.

SHIRAZ RUGS

The old Shiraz rugs were works of art, but since the province is no longer the seat of Government the weaving and designs have deteriorated. These rugs come in warm tones, some with the pear pattern, but more frequently three elongated diamond medallions; the space between filled in with small designs and always showing figures of men and animals.

Diagonal stripes sometimes fill the field of these carpets and some have these stripes converging and meeting a centre stripe. The borders are wide and richly ornamented, the edge is worked over and over and tufts of wool left protruding at intervals along the sides like small tassels. The ends often have between the pile and the fringe a coarse check pattern in the Sumac stitch.

HOREVAN, SERAPI, KHORASAN, AND
MESHED OR MUSKABAD RUGS

Ghorevan, or Gorevan, is a city in the district of Herez not far from Tabriz. The rugs marketed under this name are in carpet sizes and of excellent quality. The figures are large and bold, always geometrical, and they usually have a large centre medallion. The corners are frequently cut off and the border has one broad main stripe usually set between two narrow ones. The background is frequently blue, bright yet of a soft, pleasing quality; old rose, tans, browns, and buff grays are employed in combination in the carpets and sometimes take the place of the blue as the main body colour. Serapi rugs are made in or near the village of Sirab in the Gorevan district. The patterns are mostly of the Tabriz variety and as a rule lighter colours are employed than in the Gorevan. They come almost exclusively in carpet sizes and stand about midway between the Gorevan



Bokhara Rug, Tekke Design

and Tabriz rugs as to quality and price. Khorasan rugs come in all sizes and the pear pattern in great variety is the characteristic design, although some have a medallion in the centre. The border has one main stripe in which a waving vine is usually found, or the Herati or the pear pattern. The distinguishing characteristic of the rugs is their silky, fleece-like appearance suggesting the long nap of canton flannel. It is produced by the long pile; four or five rows are tied with no weft to separate them, then three or four threads are thrown across; this leaves long strands of wool to untwist and become very silky with wear. A system of uneven clipping is also employed which heightens this effect. The Mesheds, or Muskabads, as they are often called in Turkey, come from the capitol of the Khorasan district and are warm and lustrous in tone and follow more the conventional medallion and cut-off corner design than the Khorasan proper.

CAUCASIAN RUGS

The Caucasus is the gateway from Europe into Persia, and although at the present time Russia shares with Persia the possession of this territory, still rugs of fine make and usually classed as Persian come into the market from this region in great quantities. They are known to trade as Daghestan, Shirvan, Kabistan, Kazak, Lesghian, Tzitzî, Sumac, etc.

DAGHESTAN AND SHIRVAN RUGS

Old Daghestan and Shirvan rugs are seldom to be found in the market now, but occasionally a fine specimen can be obtained as like that in the accompanying illustration. It has three medallions in the centre edged with the latch hook characteristic of the Daghestan rug. This design is a corruption of the old Chinese "fret" and shows how Mongolian influence and thought have traversed the high mountain ranges that divide these countries. The

lattice work made up of triangles is also typical of this make of rug, for it is employed more extensively in the Daghestan than any other. The origin of this design is easy to trace; for the Mohammedans, accepting as they do the Old Testament, have in their art the signs and forms common to the Jews. The triangle, the Jewish symbol of divinity, is a favourite device. The Mohammedan rosary differs from all others in that it is divided by projecting beads into three parts with an equal number of beads between (usually thirty-three), thus making the rosary in the form of a triangle. One must not confuse the Mohammedan rosary with the string of beads which upon all occasions these people are passing through their fingers. These strings of beads are not divided into three parts and have no religious significance, but they serve the same purpose with Turkish gentlemen that twirling a lead pencil and playing with the watch chain does with men of Western nations.

The Shirvan and Daghestan rugs have many borders, one of which is pretty sure to be made up of the conventionalized swastika, that curious symbol of good luck common to all races from the North American Indians to the Mohammedans, Chinese, and Bhuddists. The Roman key is thought to be but a corruption of this symbol. That this rug was made by a Shiite Mohammedan is evident at a glance from the figures of men, birds, and animals scattered upon the field.

Shirvan rugs are made in quantities now, but they have degenerated from the fine old examples, although occasionally a good piece comes into the market such as the one shown in the illustration. The warp is a mixture of white and brown wool twisted. The ground is a most beautiful blue with no suggestion of green in the tint. The geometrical figures are laid upon this soft, intense blue in shades of lighter blue, tans, yellows, and reddish browns. The same colour scheme prevails in the



Beluchistan Rug

borders except for the one white stripe containing the tarantula pattern, in which in each alternate figure a sage green replaces the light blue, producing a lovely effect. The upper octagon in the pattern forms a prayer niche.

KABISTAN RUGS

The vowels are never written in Turkish and Persian, and the characters do not stand for single consonants but represent combinations of sounds as in shorthand, so that the same name is spelled in a great variety of ways when it is translated into English. For example, the name of the Turkish city of Harput is spelled Kharpud, Harput, Harpoot, etc., the vowels "a" and "u" not being written and only the sounds indicated; the result is very misleading and each person can interpret this phonetic spelling to suit himself. This custom accounts for the substitution of the "a" for the "u" in Kabistan, for all these rugs are made in the Kuba district. The Kabistan (Kubistan)

or Kuba rugs, as they are called in Turkey, are one of the best fabrics made in the Caucasus. They are closely woven and closely sheared and lie well upon the floor. The pattern shows Daghestan influences, large diamond medallions often being found in the field. The elongated S, the symbol of the fire worshippers, set horizontally occurs frequently in these rugs. The Kabistan carpets have either weft or warp, and sometimes both, of cotton; and the sides are almost always overcast, making a firm selvedge. No. 1 shows a comparatively modern Kabistan probably not more than fifty years old; No. 2, an antique with the sheen and soft colour tones imparted alone by age.

It was called a Kuba by the old Turk of whom I purchased it, and in every particular resembles an old Kuba. It also has the overhand selvedge common to these rugs. In design it partakes somewhat of the characteristics of an antique Shirvan; the diagonal arrangement of the convention-

alized Persian rose, and the distribution of the border stripes are sometimes found in the Shirvan as well as the antique Kubas.

KAZAK RUGS

The coarse, heavy texture and strong, rather crude geometrical designs of the Kazak carpets are a natural expression of the character of the people who weave them, wild nomad tribes, living in tents among the mountains.

The old Kazak shown in the illustration is beautiful in its colour harmony made up of reds, blues, whites, and yellows, softened by age.

In weaving these rugs, four threads of the weft are thrown across after every row of knots. This causes the pile threads to overlap each other and gives the wool ample opportunity to untwist and become lustrous. The crap or turtle border is a distinctive feature of these carpets.

LESGHIAN STRIP

Fine carpets usually long and narrow are made by the Lesghian tribes who inhabit the foot hills of the mountain ranges back of Tiflis.

The field is very narrow and the carpet consists mainly of border. Blue and soft tans are the predominating shades, and all the designs of the Caucasus region and some strictly Persian are employed.

Notice the water motive in the field of the rug in the illustration.

TZITZI RUGS

No survey of the rugs of Persian make would be complete without a mention of the Tzitzzi, of which even the modern specimens are very good.

The ground of these rugs, usually blue in colour, is filled with small pattern rosettes and scroll. The field is narrow in comparison with the border, which is composed of many stripes with small geometrical and



Section of Old Mosul Rug, No. 11

floral designs. Yellows are the usual prevailing colour tone of the borders. The whole rug gives one an impression of a rich mosaic.

SUMAC RUGS

Sumac or, as they are sometimes called, Kashmere rugs belong, strictly speaking, to the kelim family. They are woven like a kelim and the designs embroidered on as the rug is woven. They are heavy and very durable as a floor covering, the long, loose ends of the wool used in working in the designs pad, as it were, the under side of the rug. These carpets come in large sizes and are particularly suitable for library and dining-room use. They are made by the tribes in the Transcaucas. These people resent the advent of civilization and hate the Russians and their railroad. When I was living in the interior of Turkey a whole tribe emigrated there, travelling all that distance to get away from the progress of the times. They

were a very picturesque company in their Circassian costumes. The carpet, a portion of which is shown in the accompanying illustration, I purchased from the loom where their women were weaving it. They were very devout Mohammedans, and yet around the central figures or medallions (as is the case in nearly all rugs of this make) there is the symbol of the cross which, had they realized what it meant, nothing could have induced them to weave.

The tribes who originally made these rugs were what is called in Turkey *kisilbach*, a term of great opprobrium and abhorrence to a Mohammedan. The *kisilbachs* have never accepted Mohammedanism, and are still at heart Christians. They never attend the mosque services but have a worship of their own and once a year at least celebrate in secret the Lord's Supper. When travelling in the interior of Turkey as we approached a small village I inquired of the *arabiji* (the driver of our

wagon) if he thought we could obtain any fresh fruit or vegetables in this town. He replied: "No, madam, nothing; God doesn't even know anything about these people, they are kisil-bach." The mosque in the town, which a zealous Sultan had built to encourage them to proper worship, was used as a storehouse for their grain; and the gallery of the minaret where the Muezzin should have paced to call the faithful to prayer was a nesting place for the storks. The knot of destiny dating back to Solomon is nearly always to be found in these rugs and is repeated many times in the medallion and field of this particular rug.

TURKOMAN RUGS

These rugs come from the territory bounded by the Caspian Sea, the Sea of Asal, Afghanistan, Persia, and the Chinese frontier. Wild nomad tribes occupy this district and weave rugs of great beauty and very ancient design. Bokhara, Yomoud,

Afghan or Khiva, Bokhara, Samarkand, Beluchistan, and Kashgar all come from this region.

BOKHARA RUGS

Bokhara rugs, so called in America and England, would not be recognized by that name by the Turkoman tribes of the Transcaucas who weave them. As they were formerly shipped from the city of Bokhara in company with the Khiva, Afghan, and Yomouds, the name on the bill of lading adhered to the rugs. Fine specimens of the Bokhara or Turkoman rugs are now extremely difficult to obtain. With the Russian occupation of this district has come into use the cheaper and more easily prepared aniline dyes, and, sad to relate, the people have become corrupted in their taste.

One sees now for sale Bokhara rugs of all shades from a brown to an old rose, but a glance at the under side will usually reveal the rich red aniline dyes, which on the surface have been toned down (chem-



Kurdish Kelim

ically) to these shades so different from the rich reds of the old vegetable-dyed Bokhara. There are few rugs that have remained so true to the original design as the Bokhara. Travel-pilgrimages and encroaching civilization have nearly brought to an end the pure tribal designs; not so with the Bokhara, for to this day nothing can induce the Turkoman tribes who weave them to depart from the design handed down to them by their forefathers. Would they had been equally true to their traditions in the matter of dyes!

These rugs come in two patterns known in the East by the name of Tekke and Royal. The prayer rugs are called Tekke from their use in the Tekkes or places of worship of the Dervish sects to which these tribes belong. In the interior of Turkey the tombs of saints are also called Tekkes, and Mohammedans make pilgrimages to them as the Catholics do to their shrines. The word "Tekke," however, unless qualified, always means a place of Dervish wor-

ship, and by the term "Dervish" one must not think them always to be of the howling or whirling kind, for there are many sects of Dervishes whose form of worship has nothing of the spectacular about it.

The prayer niche of the Tekke Bokhara is almost octagonal in shape, and one scarcely notices it at a first glance. These prayer rugs are always divided into four sections, the field in each section being invariably covered with a fine design representing candlesticks (candles in profusion are used in the Dervish Tekkes). The bands that divide the field into four sections always contain strictly tribal or family designs and vary in different rugs, so that even in a large collection one will seldom find two rugs with the same designs in the border and upon these transverse bands. The Armenians call these rugs Khatchli Bokharas, for the reason that the bands that divide the field into four sections form a cross, and the word "Khatchli" in the Armenian language means "a cross."

The Royal design or pattern is the octagon that one always associates with a Bokhara rug. Again we must make a long journey over high mountains to trace this pattern to its home, for the Bokhara octagon with its light divisions (its centre light on one side and dark on the other) is of Mongolian origin. It is a conventionalizing for convenience in weaving of the Chinese circle of the zodiac. The eight divisions of location, according to Chinese mythology, were presided over by eight animal deities, just as in all zodiacal representations the signs are under the control of presiding forces. The powers of light and powers of darkness formed the two extremes, and in the weaving the colours representing these powers are given in their proper location, but the figures are omitted as would be expected in a Mohammedan representation.

The Yomoud Bokhara are large rugs in colour resembling the so-called Bokhara proper, but borrowing in design from the

Daghestan, Shirvan, and other Caucasian weaves. Geometrical and rectilinear designs prevail, the reds of the Bokhara family are used for the background but the blues and bright yellows are skilfully introduced. In the borders, and frequently around the diamond-shaped and octagonal figures in the field, the latch-hook design is to be found. These rugs have a coarse, wide selvedge which sometimes is worked in squares or checker fashion in red, blue, and brown; this selvedge is always in the kelim stitch. They have the striped web end and the long fringe of goats' hair peculiar to the rugs made in this region. The Afghan Bokharas are heavy carpets containing the Bokhara octagon much enlarged, set in the red field with no small designs to fill in the background. They sometimes have a touch of white and yellow in the octagon; the borders frequently contain crude flower forms. They are finished with a coarse, straggling, grayish-brown fringe. The Khiva Bokharas are



Senne Kelim

easily mistaken for the real ones; but a close examination will reveal the difference, as they are of much coarser weave, the octagonal design is softened and not so closely followed, and sometimes animal forms are introduced into the field and border. A variety of these Turkoman carpets, now rarely seen in the market, is the Bushir or Beshir. The reds are lighter in tone than in the Bokharas and show less of the brownish tinge; dull yellows are used sparingly and very little white. The figures are larger and the border has the saw-tooth arrangement found in some Persian rugs.

SAMARKAND

Samarkand rugs to even the most casual observer suggest Mongolian influence. The central field is covered with the Chinese fret in red on a blue ground or vice versa, reds and blues being the prevailing tones. Round medallions from one to five are set on this background and con-

tain dragon, fish, pheasants, and sometimes flowers. There are usually two borders. These carpets and the Kahgars are first cousins. They have three border stripes as a rule, and terra cottas and pinks are introduced into the colour scheme, but the designs are like the Samarkand.

BELUCHISTAN RUGS

Made by nomad tribes who inhabit the Kirman Provinces in Persia, they are heavy, rather coarse carpets both as to texture and design. There are hosts of these rugs in the market, but good ones are becoming scarce. They generally have a deep madder red background in which stars and even constellations are wrought in white. In some of the old Beluchistans, as in the accompanying illustration, beautiful colouring is used in the geometrical design employed.

A deep web always extends in either end of this make of rug and is nearly always striped in dark colours, and sometimes,

as in the illustration, a pattern is worked upon this striped web. The sheen of these rugs is one peculiar to themselves. With a pile like velvet and a silken sheen falling over it, the good specimens are indeed beautiful and serve to tone down lighter rugs in a room.

SADDLE-BAGS AND PILLOWS

Saddle-bags are the travelling equipment of the Orientals, replacing trunks and every sort of travelling bag. They are made from rugs and are stoutly bound with leather, closing at the top with a most ingenious arrangement of leather loops on one side which are put through the holes in the leather binding on the opposite side, and then slipped successively one into the other, forming a regular chain stitch. The last loop is fastened with a sort of wooden button or a padlock.

They come in all sizes from the very large sort (see illustration) which, suspended one on each side, make a pack for an

animal, to the very small one in which the children carry their school books. Along the route of the railway which the Germans are building to Bagdad and have finished as far as Eregli, the travellers waiting at the stations present a strange appearance in their picturesque Oriental costumes. Most incongruous of all is their baggage, consisting of saddle-bags of every size and colour filled with all sorts of commodities. The iron horse has replaced the Arab steed, but the saddle-bag survives, and I fancy it will be a long time before leather Gladstones and valises will find favour in the eyes of the Oriental. Let us hope so at least, for travel in Turkey will have lost half its charms when the colour combinations in costumes and travel equipment shall give place to the sombre European clothes and common leather bags. Among the rugs that come for saddle-bags one still finds some very choice bits, beautiful Sennas, etc.

Along the back of the divans in East-



Saddle Bag

ern homes is placed a row of long pillows covered with rugs and kelims woven for this purpose. The collector should not overlook these small pieces in his search for beautiful colouring and choice weaving.

KELIMS

Kelims, the oldest product of the weaver's loom, are very extensively used in the Orient. They replace rugs almost entirely in the houses of the middle classes, and for this purpose the heavy Kurdish kelims are used. These come in one and two pieces, generally the latter, and are sewed together like breadths of carpet. They are woven in stripes usually in dark tones, and a design worked in white is largely employed. They are very durable and could well be used for floor coverings in bed rooms and country houses.

A coarse sort of kelim called Pallas is used in Turkey for all sorts of things. It replaces kelims in the homes of the poor,

it is used for saddle-bags, saddle-cloths, covering for horses and mules, and for market bags. It comes in strips about a half a yard wide and from three to five yards long. Even in this the lowest grade of kelim the colours are combined in a charming and effective way. A better grade about a yard wide is sometimes most beautifully embroidered and is used for sacks for transport of grain. In travelling one looks with envy at these lovely sacks piled high on the creaking buffalo carts. The bags with a large compartment for bread and a smaller one on each side for cheese that the shepherds wear on their lonely marches in the mountains are made from this material, embroidered and covered with tufts of wool to keep off the "evil eye." The girdles used by the Kurds for the double purpose of holding up their trousers and carrying their money are also of kelim weave. Most lovely pillow coverings of the same material are to be had, particularly in the region of Konia.

In Oriental houses there are no rooms set apart and furnished as sleeping apartments. The beds are simply a mattress filled with cotton or wool and placed at night in any room. A single heavy quilt faced with cotton cloth serves both in winter and summer for covering, for only the girdle and outside coat is removed at night. These mattress beds, together with the bedding, are stored during the day in cupboards or on shelves built into the wall. Wood being so scarce and expensive, these cupboards seldom have any doors, but short kelims are woven to hang in front of them. (See illustration.) Wealthy men, sheiks, brigands, etc., delight in fine trappings for their horses, and exquisite Senna kelims are made for this purpose. Kelims are also used in the place of prayer rugs and are woven with this end in view, the design containing a prayer niche. The Senna kelims woven in the Persian province of that name are the finest made. They come generally only in the cupboard size and for

saddle blankets. They have the open-work design in the weave and some of them are as fine as pocket handkerchiefs ; such is the quality of the one shown in the colour plate. The finer Turkish kelims with a border, which are used in America for portieres and to which the name Kis Kelim is given, are not known by this name in the Orient. These kelims are mostly made in the vicinity of Malatia, are not embroidered, and have an open-work pattern in the weaving, so that when held up to the light there appear to be holes all through the fabric, but closer scrutiny will reveal a regular pattern. The design of these kelims form large medallions as they are originally sewed together with the borders on the outside ; this medallion design is particularly characteristic of the Malatia weave. Malatia is a town in Asia Minor not far distant from the Euphrates River and is situated on the main caravan and post route from the coast to Diabekir and Mosul. The population is mostly Armenian, and it is these people



Allepo Kelim. Malatia Kelim

who make the kelims and very durable and beautiful embroidered table covers and aprons. Single kelims are also woven here, large enough for divan and couch covers and much more sanitary than upholstery.

Aleppo is also a great centre for kelim weaving. The Aleppo kelim is generally finer and has more open work than the Malatia. They seldom, if ever, have the medallion design, and the colourings are much softer and suggest more the old Persian combinations. They are the most expensive of the Turkish make. The Bagdad portieres or strips of which the modern djijims are an imitation were once very common in the market, but even in Bagdad they have sadly deteriorated, and the fine specimens are exceedingly difficult to obtain. I was never able to find but one of the bride Bagdad kelims, as they are called, in which the pattern is outlined with gold thread in the centre stripe, which is so effective against the beautiful rich-toned red which is always the colour of this section of

the curtain. In olden times these curtains were the chief article in the bride's trousseau, and years were spent in making it as beautiful as possible. To meet the demands of the European market small kelims suitable for table covers are woven at all the principal centres of kelim manufacture ; some of these reproduce old patterns and come in beautiful colours.

A FINAL WORD

Under the old régime of Abdul Hamid "progress" was a tabooed word; no one even dared to think about changing the old order of things. There was no incentive to improvement in any line; on the contrary, all the mighty influence of the greatest of despots was used to prevent reforms in any direction. In the interior, unpenetrated by railroads and carefully guarded by an army of secret spies lest any new ideas should be introduced, the customs and manner of living dated back to the times of Abraham. With wants so simple, food so cheap, and time of no value, it is little wonder that such beautiful rugs and kelims could be made at so small a cost. Now all is changed; and with Turkey and Persia under Constitutional Governments welcoming modern improvements and civilization, with con-

cessions granted for railroads from Constantinople to Bagdad and from Caesarea to Van Harput, Diabekir, and Mosul, the days are numbered when even in factories men and women are going to work for four and a quarter cents a day and board themselves. It requires no prophetic vision to see that Oriental rugs will be a luxury in the not distant future. Moreover, the rug collector and student has no time to lose in gathering the remaining antiques and moderately old rugs hidden away in homes, mosques, and baths in the interior of these countries.

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